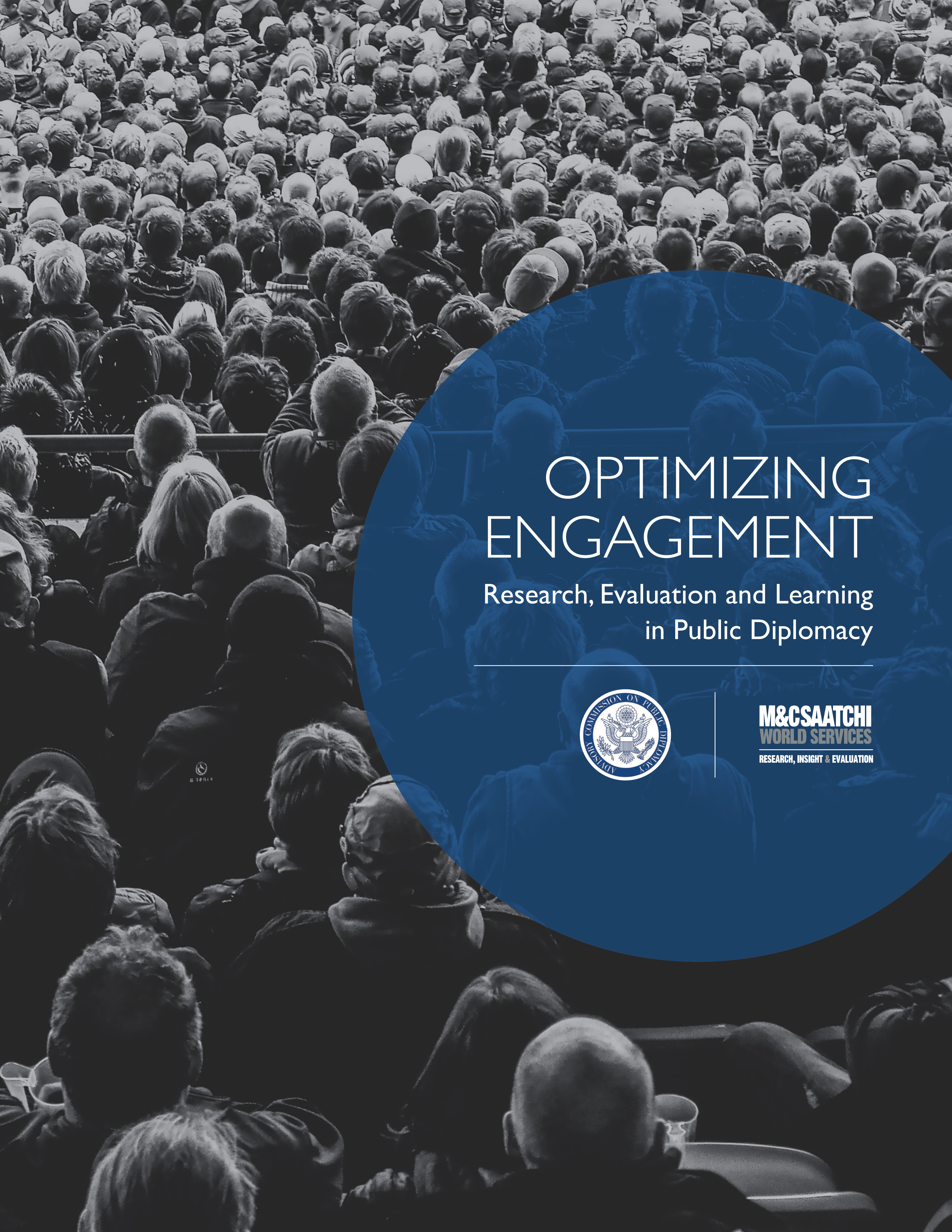

OPTIMIZING ENGAGEMENT

Research, Evaluation and Learning in Public Diplomacy

ADVISORY COMMISSION ON PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

M&CSAATCHI WORLD SERVICES
RESEARCH, INSIGHT & EVALUATION

To the President, Congress, Secretary of State and the American People:

The United States Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy (ACPD), authorized pursuant to Public Law 112-239 [Sec.] 1280(a)-(c), hereby submits a report on Optimizing Engagement: Research, Evaluation, and Learning in Public Diplomacy.

ACPD is a bipartisan panel created by Congress in 1948 to formulate and recommend policies and programs to carry out the public diplomacy (PD) functions vested in U.S. government entities, and to appraise the effectiveness of those activities across the globe. ACPD was reauthorized in December 2016 to complete the Comprehensive Annual Report on Public Diplomacy and International Broadcasting Activities, as well as to produce other reports that support more effective efforts to understand, inform, and influence foreign audiences.

The report represents cutting-edge assessment strategies and tactics as well as recommendations for maximizing the effectiveness of State Department public diplomacy research evaluation and learning activities.

ACPD is deeply grateful for the support of the Office of the Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs for its support in commissioning this report.

Respectfully submitted,

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CONTENTS

ACRONYMS

ACPD
Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy

API
Application Program Interface

BBG
Broadcasting Board of Governors

BME
Baseline, Midline, Endline

CSO
Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations

DFAT
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Australia)

DIGI
Digital Index of Global Influence

DMI
Digital Methods Initiative

DOD
Department of Defense

ECA
Bureau of Educational and Cultural Exchanges

FAM
Foreign Affairs Manual

FCO
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

FFO
Federal Foreign Office

FU
Follow-Up Survey

GVA
Gross Value Added

HAC
Hague Academic Coalition

HEI
Higher Education Institutions

ICDK
Innovation Centres Denmark

IDWG
Inter-Departmental Working Group

Ifa
Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen (Institute for Foreign Cultural Relations)

IIP
Bureau of International Information Programs

INR
Bureau of Intelligence and Research

MFA
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

NAO
National Audit Office

NGO
Non-Governmental Organization

OPCW
Organization against Proliferation of Chemical Weapons

OTI
Office of Transition Initiatives

PD
Public Diplomacy

R&D
Research and Development

REL
Research, Evaluation and Learning

R/PPR
Office of Policy, Planning and Resources

SI
Swedish Institute

SRHR
Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights

UN
United Nations

US DOS
United States Department of State

USG
United States Government

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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FOREWORD

Shawn Powers
Executive Director

U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy

Improved capacity for research and assessment of public diplomacy programs has been a priority for the U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy (ACPD) since its creation as an independent body by Congress in 1948. In its 1957 annual report, for example, Commission Chairman Mark May wrote: "Evaluation of U.S. Information Agency work remains uneven. The Commission urges that greater emphasis be placed on the task of measuring the effectiveness and impact of the total effort."

We've seen quite a bit of progress in this area over the past 60-plus years. The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Exchanges (ECA) was among the first bureaus at the State Department to establish its own, stand-alone evaluation unit. The Bureau of International Information Programs' (IIP) evaluation team, primarily encompassed within the Office of Analytics, is increasingly seen as a go-to partner in digital metrics and analysis, partnering with offices across the Department to improve our understanding of how information circulates and impacts particular audiences. The Under Secretary's Office of Policy, Planning, and Resources (R/PPR) has expanded its Research and Evaluation Unit, which provides research and evaluation services to diplomatic missions around the world as well as the regional and functional bureaus and works across the public diplomacy (PD) bureaus on collaborative projects and to help aggregate and share best practices.

In February 2018, ACPD organized a Research, Evaluation, and Learning Summit at the U.S. Institute of Peace to highlight best practices and identify key gaps and areas for improvement in US efforts to continually assess, learn, and improve the effectiveness of public diplomacy programs. By bringing together members of State's PD research and evaluation community with experts from inter-agency bodies and the private sector, the Summit advanced our mission to measure and design impactful public engagement efforts.

Coinciding with the Summit, ACPD commissioned M&C Saatchi World Services to conduct an audit of global best practices in assessing public diplomacy programs, the results of which are included in this report. Put simply, this field-defining effort is a comprehensive accounting of best practices from around the world. Drawing upon 28 detailed case studies, it provides in-depth analysis of the research and assessment practices from 17 countries, including input from Brazilian, Chinese, Turkish, and Russian practitioners.

I invite you to explore this report in great depth. The findings are both instructive for research and assessment professionals, but also aspirational for those overseeing public diplomacy campaigns, offices, and operations. The Commission is grateful to M&C Saatchi World Services, and its Chief Research Officer, Dr. Gerry Power, for this tremendous resource that will no doubt guide practitioners and decision-makers moving forward.

One of the most important findings is the existence of a latent and capable network of global professionals eager for the State Department to take a leadership role in building a global community of practice among like-minded governments interested in research and data-driven and strategically-oriented public diplomacy efforts. Due to the scale of our PD operations, and the diversity of activities that public diplomacy programs include, others look to the State Department to lead and define this field.

Building on the innovative approaches exemplified by IIP's Office of Analytics and R/PPR's Research and Evaluation Unit, the State Department is uniquely positioned to convene key stakeholders, establish a framework for the sharing of best practices and research, and most importantly, to shape the agenda for this global community of experts. This is a rare opportunity to seed a force-multiplying network capable of improving the effectiveness of public diplomacy programs aiming to build robust, resilient, and productive democratic societies. We need to work closely with our allies on this front today more than ever.

I would like to emphasize that the learning component of the assessment process is perhaps the most under-appreciated piece of this puzzle. The value of assessing the impact of our programs is not simply to show Congress that public diplomacy funding is a terrific investment for taxpayer dollars—although that certainly is important. Most importantly, rigorous assessment helps the community of PD practitioners to better understand what works, what doesn't, and why, and then to make adjustments. This requires not only that we properly invest in assessment tools and expertise, but also that we put knowledge management systems in place that allow for capturing and sharing these evaluations across the Department. More than anything, we need to improve our ability to learn from failure. We need to work together to build a culture that values research and assessment as integral to the work we do.

In February 2018 the Department of State issued updated Foreign Affairs Manual (FAM) guidance on "Design, Monitoring, and Evaluation" (18 FAM 301.4) that makes clear that research, evaluation, and learning are Departmental priorities moving forward. This updated guidance coincides with the Commission's summit, continued Congressional interest in research and evaluation, and an operational shift towards integrating research and evaluation into the design and strategic planning components of public diplomacy. It is with this in mind that the Commission puts forward the following four recommendations for optimizing our efforts to engage with audiences around the world.

First, we need to reorganize the research, monitoring, and evaluation offices throughout public diplomacy bureaus into a single, centralized and coordinated operation inside of the Under Secretary's Office of Policy, Planning, and Resources. This office should:

1. **LEAD** and coordinate all research and assessment of DOS public diplomacy programs and campaigns, including overseeing the establishment and testing of core metrics to assess programs' effectiveness vis-à-vis our foreign policy goals.

2. **COORDINATE** research conducted and gathered throughout government and available from the private sector, including from the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG), the Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations (CSO), the Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR), and the Department of Defense (DOD) in order to ensure that program managers and diplomats have access to all relevant information when designing a new public diplomacy program. Over time, this consolidated research and assessment hub should create a platform for the real-time presentation and sharing of all data related to a PD program or campaign.

3. **ESTABLISH**, publicize, and manage a clear, simple digital interface for public diplomacy professionals in the field to request assistance with a wide range of research or assessment needs.

4. **PRIORITIZE** research on the value of particular metrics to better understand which metrics matter and why. Of particular interest is research on the significance of favorability of the United States and other countries.

5. **ADOPT** flexible contracting mechanisms, perhaps modeled after Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI), to allow for a nimble and discerning commissioning process. We need processes that allow us to better vet and select our research partners, as this is the only way to guarantee the data collected is valid and reliable.

6. **EMBRACE** assessments that provide insights as well as those that demonstrate impact. The office should also pursue more technically-based approaches to data collection, including mobile-friendly applications that allow for the casual accumulation of data.

7. **INVEST** in tools that enable us to learn from the aggregate of evaluations at the macro level and establish trends over time. As the State Department invests considerable resources to evaluate its programs, we need to think of ways to learn from these projects not just on the micro-scale – that is to say, project by project – but to look for trends across evaluations that can provide insight that is otherwise unobserved.

8. **BE AFFORDED** the resources and purview required to build a research and assessment agenda that focuses not just on the here-and-now, but also the long-term measurement and effectiveness of public diplomacy programs. Unpredictable budgeting and staffing have a decisive and detrimental impact on the potential return on any investments in research, evaluation and learning initiatives.

Second, a consolidated unit needs to establish a strategic framework to guide the structure and decision-making processes of public diplomacy research and evaluation operations. The scaffold could be modeled at least in part after USAID's Program Cycle and Adaptive Management frameworks and be built from the ground up to fit the needs and reflect the challenges specific to the research and evaluation of public diplomacy. Specifically, this strategic framework should be:

1. **ORGANIC AND INCLUSIVE:** This strategic framework should be crafted through a multi-stakeholder process that incorporates voices from across PD bureaus and the field to cultivate a workflow that provides substantive benefits to teams overseeing and implementing our PD programs here in Washington DC and in the field.

2. **CLEAR AND CONCISE:** The framework should succinctly detail how research, monitoring, evaluation, and learning form a synchronous and continuous process. Put another way: What are our goals? How do we measure them? And which programs can be most useful in a particular context?

3. **PRIORITIZE:** The strategic framework should prioritize:

   a. Adaptive management techniques, whereby monitoring is used to change course if needed to ensure programs achieve maximum impact.

   b. The institutionalization of learning from every evaluation. Evaluations should be iterative, as opposed to a final product. No single assessment should be conducted if it isn't used to shape another program.

   c. Establishing explicit feedback loops, detailing how information and knowledge circulate into the field, and back to Washington, in a streamlined and productive way.

   d. Transparency. We need to be transparent in our evaluation processes, including making every evaluation publicly accessible unless it includes sensitive or classified information. USAID is a model in this regard.

e. Integrating best practices from the academic and private sectors, including through programs like USAID's Partnerships for Enhanced Engagement in Research.

f. Research that provides strategic insight into programs or metrics that apply to multiple countries or contexts

g. Identifying which measurable indicators can be used to assess long-term impacts of programming across different country and usage contexts. We should prioritize creating metrics that *"measure the climate and not just the weather."*

4. **CONSIDER** models pioneered by others, including the Swiss Federal Council's Strategy for Communication Abroad, which stands out as an integrated program involving multiple partners that is supported by a long-term commitment and investment from the Swiss government. This results in a program that provides the optimal combination of iterative data gathering on multiple activities that are aligned with long-term strategic objectives. The British Council, too, has much to offer, in particular their approach to defining strategic audiences and thinking about programming along the lines of micro-specific audience segments and policy goals.

5. **SELF-REFLECTIVE:** The framework should establish clear goals and identify metrics for what the consolidated unit aims to achieve in the short, medium, and long-term. This will allow for a transparent and robust assessment of the unit itself.

Third, we need to consolidate existing knowledge management platforms (e.g., MAT, PD-RAM, PDRP, PDCC, etc.) into a single user and mobile friendly knowledge management system that is streamlined, adaptable and reduces the burden for diplomats in the field. This platform would:

1. **INTEGRATE** all efforts at monitoring and evaluating programs into a single mobile-friendly and digital space.

2. **INCORPORATE** machine-learning and specific algorithmic intelligence to draw from existing research and evaluations when planning and designing new PD programs and campaigns.

3. **EMPHASIZE** learning from all programs, allow for a range of data entry points and types of data, and facilitate the use of data and analysis to inform program design in a multi-faceted way.

4. **MAKE DATA ENTRY EASY.** For example, a platform could include the option of snapping a photo of a group of program alumni, and using simple image analysis, automatically note the number of participants participating in the event. The application could also have a "record now" function to allow a user to easily record a conversation with a program participant (with permission) and automatically add the audio (and an automated transcription) to the details of the program. This type of functionality would allow for near real-time monitoring public diplomacy programs.

5. **SIMPLIFY.** The platform should operate across devices, be mobile-friendly, reduce the burden in the field, and provide a value-add to all stakeholders interested in monitoring and evaluation.

Fourth, the Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy intends to establish a Research and Assessment Subcommittee[1]:

1. The subcommittee's objective would be to provide objective feedback early in the research and assessment processes to ensure that rigorous (and appropriate) methods are used and that the findings are instructive. They would also help establish a set of achievable goals for this research, emphasize the employment of research in strategic planning, and serve as a validity check on the suggestions that emerge from evaluation reports.

2. The subcommittee will review select State Department and BBG research agendas, methodologies and interpretations at least twice a year, and perhaps more often, contingent on funding.

3. It will be comprised of selected academics, market researchers, and research professionals from private organizations.

4. It will formally assess the state of the State Department's public diplomacy research and evaluation efforts every three years.

1. Launch of the Research and Assessment Subcommittee is dependent on final approval to hire ACPD's Research and Outreach Coordinator and sufficient funding to support the Subcommittee's activities.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy (ACPD) commissioned M&C Saatchi World Services to conduct an exploratory scoping study on how approaches to Research, Evaluation and Learning are executed by major players in the Public Diplomacy (PD) sector around the globe. The findings of the research are designed to inform how the United States Department of State (US DOS) addresses the challenge of optimizing engagement in an uncertain, dynamic and mediated global environment.

Twenty-eight interviews were conducted with experts from 17 countries with significant experience of research to inform and to measure the impact of public diplomacy and cultural relations projects, initiatives and programs. In addition, over 40 specialist reports and project documents shared by the interviewees were reviewed to identify best-in-class examples of research, evaluation and learning practices. The findings of the research point to a set of strategic, practice-based and data-focused recommendations.

From a strategic perspective:

- Recognizing that PD is designed to contribute to a broad range of political and economic outcomes in the national interest, it is imperative that data gathering and analysis situate the impact of PD within a model of influence that goes beyond communication variables only. The Danish Innovation Centres (ICDKs), which aim to link their PD activities to national R&D and business interests, are a good example of this approach.

- There is value in creating a central Research, Evaluation and Learning (REL) hub for insights and assessment within the US DOS to pool resources and optimize investment in data gathering, analytics, insights and learning. A useful model is Presence Switzerland which serves as a hub for the Inter-Departmental Working Group (IDWG) on Communications Abroad, across the government of Switzerland and multiple Swiss cultural, business and educational agencies (see Example 19).

- It is imperative that the US DOS build a REL practice that is future-proofed – dynamic and nimble, incorporating responsive feedback loops. A good practice model is the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade's (DFAT) monitoring and evaluation framework for the Australia Awards, which monitors outputs, as well as short- and middle-term outcomes to identify and address barriers to long-term goals (see Example 20).

- There is an opportunity to design a strategy not only to engage with the private sector and technology companies, but to ally with those that specialize in quantitative and qualitative data optimisation. The foundations for this approach are exemplified by the Danish Innovation Centres, located close to key technology parks globally (see Example 8).

- Finally, it is worth considering a convening role for the US DOS to leverage the PD community's collaborative spirit and appetite for knowledge sharing. This could provide the United States Government (USG) with a long-term competitive advantage in the influence space by ensuring that it is actively informed by the development of the most cutting-edge insight and assessment tools, which would enable it to lead the way in measuring the impact of its public diplomacy projects, initiatives and programs.

In terms of practice:

- It is imperative that the US DOS invest in capacity building research teams in technology-enabled and digital research approaches and methods. Existing resources that could be easily drawn on include the Digital Methods Initiative (DMI) at the University of Amsterdam, the UK-based DIGI collaborative, and the Turkish Diplomacy.Live research program (see Examples 16 and 23).

- In parallel, there is much value to be derived from platforms that enable real-time audience participation in research and co-creation activities. This is best exemplified by the Midwives4All program, created by the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) (see Example 28). Additionally, a best-in-class example from the private sector is the customer-in-the-room methodology, which enables real-time feedback from target audiences on communications and messaging. [2]

- Further, while recognizing that the Smith-Mundt Act prohibits the distribution of program materials by the US DOS to US domestic audiences, there may be potential in exploring research panels with Diaspora communities in the US to monitor their perceptions of how the USA is seen in their home countries and to identify possible routes for engagement.

- To keep abreast of the fast-changing global information ecosystem, there is an opportunity to invest in basic research to inform USG-wide programs aiming to intervene in global and regional issue-agendas. For example, the DMI cross-platform analysis & issue mapping would provide a basis for such a data gathering effort.

- Finally, a typology-based approach to PD in different contexts, based on key criteria, holds great promise for data modelling. These criteria might include: optimal/sub-optimal conditions for engagement; general support for USG policies; cultural traditions; historic relations with the USG and its people; access to Western sources of information; and level of English-language proficiency.

2. For example, see https://flyresearch.com/customer-in-the-room/

In terms of data gathering:

- It is necessary that the US DOS build models of how change happens. This is particularly true in regard to the role of digital engagement. These theories of change should formalize how digital engagement contributes to influence processes. There are multiple examples from the private and social sectors that have built in digital metrics targets into their campaign and communications strategies to track issue resonance, brand equity and message traction.

- Current research programs within the US DOS provide the basis for creating a data audit that maps out a hierarchy of different metrics of success. This data audit will facilitate a common nomenclature across US DOS research teams regarding outputs, immediate and intermediate outcomes, and impact measures. Similar data taxonomies have already been created by the Goethe Institute and the British Council (see Examples 21 and 22).

- Recognizing the dominance of visual content in popular culture and in social media, there is value in investing in building the capacity of US DOS research teams in methods that gather visual data to capture the power of imagery and video content online. The practice of analyzing visual data is commonly employed in the private sector to map out the variety of cultural references familiar and favourable to target audiences.

- And finally, these procedures and protocols can only be capitalized on when supported by a robust knowledge management system that enables data gathering, sorting and access in real-time across platforms.

INTRODUCTION

Research, Evaluation and Learning are the cornerstones of an integrated, robust and consistent strategy for optimizing audience engagement.

This report, commissioned by Dr Shawn Powers, Executive Director for the Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy (ACPD), describes how various countries and their institutions are currently employing Research, Evaluation and Learning to inform and evaluate their public diplomacy and cultural relations strategies and activities.

Three objectives guided the research:

- To identify the range of research conducted by Governmental and Non-Governmental Organizations to gather insights on how to best engage their respective audiences;
- To map the range of evidence and key metrics being gathered to capture the impact of public diplomacy initiatives;
- To understand how the insights and evidence are informing the target audience engagement strategy of key global actors in the public diplomacy space.

CHANGING LANDSCAPE

International relations are in constant flux and the forcefield of short- and long-term demands on actors have never been in sharper relief. In the current political climate of uncertainty, unpredictability and the salience of social media platforms, the old established terms of diplomatic protocol and engagement no longer apply to the same extent. The landscape occupied by State and Non-State actors is also increasingly blurred by the lines between public diplomacy, cultural relations, soft power, propaganda and fake news. In terms of research, evaluation and learning, the field of public diplomacy is characterized by a plethora of objectives, from country promotion to influence to attraction to mutual understanding, resulting in a variety of measures of success.

DATA SOURCES

The findings presented in this report are informed by desk research, twenty-eight interviews with experts, and a review of over 40 specialist reports and project documents shared by the interviewees. The experts included senior representatives from Ministries of Foreign Affairs, cultural relations institutions and think tanks, as well as a range of other key experts and academics. The analysis also integrates 28 examples of work being conducted by governments and cultural institutions across the world, to inform, evaluate and learn from their public diplomacy and cultural relations efforts.

RESEARCH

Among the experts consulted, research is focused among an increasingly diverse range of audiences. Traditional groups such as foreign publics, the media, and established and emerging opinion-leaders and decisions-makers now sit alongside emerging target audiences that include domestic publics; a more inclusive and precise targeting of sub-groups of young people; trans-border groups; strategic stakeholders such as Non-Governmental and Civil Society Organizations; and key representatives from the private sector. Public diplomacy actors are employing multiple methods to gather data offline and digitally. The extent to which key players in the sector are aligning with developments in technology varies dramatically, from tactical digital data gathering to direct engagement with global centres of technology R&D. Finally, there is a broad-based appetite for common indices, metrics and nomenclature to advance the level of professionalization and standardization in the field.

METRICS AND EVALUATION

There is a consensus regarding the imperative to substantiate the link between public diplomacy efforts and key outcomes, while simultaneously recognizing the resource and logistical barriers to delivering this evidence. There are notable examples where prominent actors have developed elaborate evaluation frameworks that aggregate performance data, track progress over time, and model conceptual approaches to engagement. Commonly used metrics within these frameworks include reach, engagement, satisfaction, perception, knowledge, skills acquisition, post-program engagement, transference, employment and economics.[3]

3. Transference refers to cases of independent uptake and dissemination of project, initiative and program themes and practices.

LEARNING BEST PRACTICE

There is little evidence that institutions working in this sector have formalized their learning or feedback mechanisms to re-calibrate their strategies based on the findings from their research and evaluation efforts. Among a select cadre of public diplomacy and cultural relations actors, however, insights and evidence are informing: 1) strategic objectives, themes and target audiences; 2) the delivery and performance against objectives; 3) the improvement of project methodologies; 4) the local adaptation of public diplomacy activities.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The report concludes with a series of considerations regarding the potential for the US DOS to build a more systematic and co-ordinated REL program, recognizing the imperative to build in digital, non-digital and visual data components.

The appendices include 28 diverse examples of good practice in the application of research, evaluation and learning principles and practice in PD activities globally. These examples were, in large part, highlighted by the interviewees consulted for this study.

METHODOLOGY

Twenty-eight interviews were conducted with a diverse sample of key experts and officials with significant experience of measuring the impact of public diplomacy and cultural relations strategies and activities (see a list of interviewees and their institutional affiliation in Appendix 1). These experts were drawn from 4 public diplomacy actor clusters – government, think-tanks, cultural institutions and other key actors (see Diagram 1 for a list of organizations consulted). These experts represent a broad range of institutions, some of which practice all forms of diplomacy, including PD, whereas others are more invested in cultural diplomacy and in engaging a range of stakeholder groups in international relations efforts.

Participants received an invitation letter from the ACPD and from M&C Saatchi World Services, explaining the purpose of the research and the substance of the interview. A semi-structured discussion guide was developed for the interviews. Each conversation lasted between 30-40 minutes and the discussion was audio-recorded and transcribed. Interviewees were not reimbursed for their time.

In addition, a review was conducted of over 40 key reports, documents and published articles addressing research, evaluation and learning on engagement optimization within the public diplomacy sector. Most of these reports were identified by the interviewees. This review served two purposes: first, it provided a detailed account of strategic frameworks, project methodologies and research approaches being employed across the sector; second, it highlighted best-in-class examples of research, evaluation and learning being employed by key actors. The reports and documents reviewed are listed in Appendix 2.

Diagram 1
PUBLIC DIPLOMACY ACTOR CLUSTERS

GOVERNMENT

- Australian DFAT
- Brazilian MFA
- Dutch MFA
- European Commission
- Foreign and Commonwealth Office
- French MFA
- German Federal Foreign Office
- Norwegian MFA
- Swedish MFA
- Swiss MFA

THINK-TANKS

- Brookings Doha Centre
- Canadian Global Affairs Institute
- Charhar Institute
- Clingendael Institute
- Lowy Institute
- Royal Elcano Institute

CULTURAL INSTITUTES

- British Council
- Goethe Institute
- German Institute for Foreign Cultural Relations (Ifa)
- Institut Français

KEY ACTORS

- Centre for Support and Development of Public Initiatives & Creative Diplomacy (PICREADI)
- China Central Television America (CCTV)
- Russian Centre for Promotion of International Affairs


Sortie

THE PUBLIC DIPLOMACY COMMUNITY

KEY FINDINGS:

- There is competition within the PD community, yet collaboration between certain partners is securing advances and innovation in research and evaluation practice.
- Actors are delivering a range of programs and interventions with diverse objectives, and consequently employing different metrics and measures of success.
- There is acknowledgement that politically motivated, short-term goals have the potential to threaten investments in research and evaluation programs.
- Long-term funding commitments are recognized as essential to the development and implementation of evaluation and learning frameworks.
- Digital data provide metrics that are common across shared platforms, and therefore facilitate standard comparisons.
- Most actors are limited in terms of their capacity to look beyond digital 'vanity' metrics.
- Country-level ratings and ranking data provided by the global indices are commonly used by some actors as part of their monitoring efforts.
- There is concern, however, expressed about the methods and sampling employed by the global indices.
- Experts from across the sector acknowledge that the data and evidence to inform and evaluate public diplomacy programs warrant greater precision and specificity.

FORCEFIELD OF COMPETITION, COLLABORATION AND ENGAGEMENT

The increasingly complex world of public diplomacy, cultural relations and soft power is populated by multiple entities competing for influence and a common goal to engage their respective audiences.[4] This means that actors are challenged with new modalities to engage audiences effectively.

" WE HAVE MOVED AWAY FROM THE OLD WORLD OF AMBASSADORS IN FOREIGN CAPITALS, TALKING GENTLY AND SENDING CULTURED REPORTS… THAT'S GONE, THAT'S NOT THE WORLD. THE AMBASSADORS ARE NOW BEING ASKED TO BUILD, TO BE IN CONTACT WITH AND TO COMMUNICATE WITH A VAST RANGE OF GROUPS AND INTERESTS, WAY OUTSIDE OF THE GOVERNMENTS OF THEIR HOST COUNTRY. "

LORD HOWELL
UK HOUSE OF LORDS

Further, research, evaluation and learning practices within the PD sector are unsurprisingly subject to the secrecy and competitive vagaries of international relations, more generally. Additionally, there is significant evidence of disharmony in the approaches to research, evaluation and learning to inform and asses PD engagement strategies and activities.

" BEAR IN MIND THIS IS A COMPETITIVE SPACE. WE'RE ENGAGED IN THE BUSINESS OF TRYING TO ADVANCE OUR RESPECTIVE COUNTRIES SOFT POWER INFLUENCE [AND] I SUSPECT MOST COUNTRIES BEHAVE IN A SIMILAR WAY, WITH A CERTAIN DEGREE OF COOPERATION IN PUBLIC DIPLOMACY, BUT IT ONLY GOES SO FAR. "

ANDREW BYRNE
AUSTRALIAN DFAT

There are, however, signs that this culture is shifting with respect to PD. Emerging actors are looking not just to established researchers and methodologists in the field, but to each other for best practice, sharing their approaches and methods in the process.[5]

" IN TERMS OF PUBLIC DIPLOMACY, WE ARE QUITE ACTIVE ON THE BRICS AND G20 LEVELS, AND I THINK THAT THESE FORMATS SHOULD BE INCLUSIVE AND OPEN FOR OTHER GLOBAL PARTNERS. WE ARE INTERESTED IN FOUNDING OF STRUCTURES, WHICH COULD ALLOW US TO UNITE EMERGING ACTORS OF PD FOR BEST PRACTICES SHARING. "

ROMAN CHUKOV
RUSSIAN CENTRE FOR PROMOTION OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

As new technologies, digitally-driven behaviours and expectations continue to shape interactions between populations and governments, historically accumulated advantage is being levelled, permitting new and smaller actors to make decisive gains. For example, #DiploHack (see Example 1) illustrates the shift towards greater collaboration, particularly with respect to new technologies and fields of expertise.[6] A collaborative project between the Dutch and Swedish Ministries of Foreign Affairs, it is designed to integrate technological, data and social media expertise with the traditional skill sets of diplomats. To date, it has organized fourteen events worldwide, from London to Hanoi to Tblisi. These events bring together diplomats with entrepreneurs, tech developers, and experts from within Non-Governmental and Civil Society Organizations and have helped to produce best-in-class public diplomacy activities such as the Swedish Midwives4All campaign (see Example 28).

DIVERSE OBJECTIVES, RANGE OF PROGRAMS, DIFFERENT MEASURES OF SUCCESS

There is a broad range of objectives and activities defined under the umbrellas of public diplomacy, cultural relations and soft power. The links between these activities are both direct and indirect, and in some cases foregrounded in commercial/economic diplomacy and bilateral aid. Inevitably, where PD is practiced as a central as opposed to a peripheral activity, a healthy tension can arise on the methods that are deemed appropriate to capture evidence of impact. Consequently, the sector does not share a common nomenclature in terms of what constitutes effective engagement with their respective audiences, nor is there always agreement in terms of what success looks like.

4. For definitions of the different concepts and subcategories currently in use within the community, see Singh and MacDonald (2017) and the British Council/ Goethe Institute (2018)

5. See The Hague Digital Diplomacy Camp 2018 Un-Conference

6. There are similarities between #DiploHack and the US TechCamps, a PD initiative hosted in the Bureau of International Information Programs (IIP) at the U.S. Department of State.

In addition, this makes data harmonization difficult and measuring and evaluating outputs, outcomes and impacts, both within and across organizations, extremely challenging.

"[THE QUESTION OF EVALUATION] IS VERY PROBLEMATIC WHEN WE DISCUSS PUBLIC DIPLOMACY PROGRAMS. HOW CAN YOU EVALUATE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF A CONFERENCE, FOR EXAMPLE? … IF THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO WANT TO CONTINUE THE CONVERSATION, I THINK THIS IS THE BEST EXAMPLE OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SUCH PROGRAMS. AGAIN, BECAUSE ALL THESE PROGRAMS ARE SUPPOSED TO ALLOW PEOPLE TO TALK, TO CREATE DIALOGUE AND CONVERSATION AMONG PEOPLE AND EXPERTS."

NATALIA BURLINOVA
PICREADI

Research objectives range from the more traditional, such as understanding how to increase the likelihood that target audiences will visit, come to study and invest in one's country; to the more nuanced objectives, such as the Goethe Institute's commitment to understanding the optimal conditions for the local sustainability of impact (see Example 22). There are also more targeted objectives, such as the Danish efforts to build knowledge of and increase their presence within R&D centres of excellence in key locations around the world (see Example 8).

"I DRAW A DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE TERM PUBLIC DIPLOMACY AND THE TERM CULTURAL RELATIONS … BOTH ARE LEGITIMATE, BUT THEY'RE QUITE DIFFERENT IN APPROACH. A LOT OF RESEARCH THAT WE DO IS EXPLORING THE ROLE OF CULTURAL RELATIONS AND ITS CONTRIBUTION TO SOFT POWER, AND THEREFORE ITS CONTRIBUTION TO THE FOREIGN POLICY OBJECTIVES OF THE UK"

JOHN DUBBER
BRITISH COUNCIL

Newer actors on the global PD stage look set to further diversify the field, as they set priorities outside the realm of more traditionally defined, more Western-centric parameters of engagement. For example, the Chinese perspective on soft power and public diplomacy has been described as divergent from that of Western nation-states. These differences, which are rooted in culture and history, motivate contrasting definitions of what victory in the race for soft power looks like, as well as distinct strategies for the achievement of success. In China's case, this means generating attraction through demonstrations of effective management of difference and social harmony, with the primary objective to stress respect for diversity. This, according to Wang Yiwei, contrasts with more typically 'Western' definitions of soft power, which emphasize instead its role in persuading foreign actors and publics to one's own point of view, and so make conversion a principal objective of PD activities.

"CHINESE HISTORY AND CULTURE HELP SHAPE ITS UNDERSTANDING OF SOFT POWER AND PUBLIC DIPLOMACY, JUST AS THE HISTORY AND EXPERIENCES OF OTHER COUNTRIES HAVE SHAPED THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF THE CONCEPT. IN LOOKING CLOSER AT THE CHINESE PERSPECTIVE, ONE CAN SEE THE STRONG RELATIONAL DIMENSION THAT SERVES AS A FOUNDATION FOR CHINESE UNDERSTANDINGS OF SOFT POWER. THIS IS IN CONTRAST WITH INDIVIDUALISM FOUND IN THE EUROPEAN AND, PARTICULARLY, AMERICAN VIEWS."

WANG YIWEI
CHARHAR INSTITUTE

MULTIPLE THREATS TO RESEARCH, EVALUATION & LEARNING

While nation-states remain committed to PD as a core practice area, the level of investment of resources in research and data gathering in PD varies dramatically from country to country. A number of interviewees expressed their frustration at the lack of resources allocated to their research and evaluation efforts. Further, there was poignant acknowledgement that politically motivated, short-term goals have the potential to threaten investments in research and evaluation programs.

"A LOT HAS BEEN LEARNED OVER THE YEARS, BUT OF COURSE WHAT'S BEEN LEARNED IS ALSO BEING UNLEARNED BECAUSE OF POLITICAL PRESSURES."

JAN MELISSEN
CLINGENDAEL INSTITUTE

Long term commitment to spending on public diplomacy research can be threatened by political upheaval, or even by the systemic instability brought about by election systems.

“ WE HAVE A VERY STABLE POLITICAL SYSTEM…AND THEREFORE, IT’S POSSIBLE FOR YOU TO DO REAL PUBLIC DIPLOMACY WORK… SOMETHING ON A MID- TO LONG-TERM VIEW; OTHERWISE, IT’S A WASTE OF MONEY. ”

PETER FANKHAUSER
PRESENCE SWITZERLAND

This means that the degree to which actors can take a long-term view varies from organization to organization and country to country. This unpredictability has a decisive impact on the potential return on any investments in research, evaluation and learning initiatives. An exceptional case is the Swiss Federal Council’s Strategy for Communication Abroad (see Example 19), which stands out as an integrated program involving multiple partners that is supported by a long-term commitment and investment from the Swiss Government. The program provides the optimal combination of iterative data gathering on multiple activities that are aligned with long-term strategic objectives. In addition, a long-term commitment to research and evaluation affords the opportunity to monitor and recalibrate ongoing efforts to ensure that they are aligned with a long-term vision.

ADVANCES IN TECHNOLOGY PRESENT CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

There is widespread evidence that the political economy of the technology sector is impacting the PD sector in terms of the imperative to engage with technology companies, to streamline strategic communications and to build digital capacity and expertise among PD practitioners.

Significant advances and the global adoption of digital communications have done more than simply provide a new source of data for research and evaluation: they are changing the very DNA of the PD profession and practice.

“ MODERN ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION IS TRANSFORMING THE SPREAD AND IMPACT OF IDEAS IN UNPREDICTABLE WAYS. INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANIZATIONS CAN NOW SHARE INFORMATION WIDELY AND INSTANTLY AT NO COST, BYPASSING CONVENTIONAL MEDIA AND ITS TRADITIONAL ROLE IN CURATING NEWS, BYPASSING CIVIC AGENDAS, AND MODERATING DEBATE. ”

FRANCIS FUKUYAMA
FREEMAN SPOGLI INSTITUTE FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDIES[7]

“ THERE WAS AN OUTCRY FROM THE ORGANIZATION – WHAT SHOULD WE PUT ON THESE CHANNELS? WE DON’T KNOW HOW TO DO THAT. THAT’S NOT OUR RESPONSIBILITY. WE’RE DIPLOMATS, WE’RE NOT COMMUNICATORS. ”

LINA EIDMARK
SWEDISH MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Technology is increasingly present in every facet of public communications, between governments and governments; governments and their citizens; and citizens and their governments. This web of interconnectedness is driving the public diplomacy sector to engage with key players in the technology sector to leverage their strategic advantage.

“ HOW SHOULD WE PUT TOGETHER THESE BIG TECHNOLOGIES? BY BRINGING THE TECHNOLOGY COMPANIES INTO PUBLIC DIPLOMACY. BECAUSE UP TO NOW WE WERE ONLY USING TECHNOLOGY AS A FINAL USER. NOW WE’RE TRYING TO REACH OUR TECH COMPANIES SO THEY CAN HELP US. ”

CLAUDIO GARON
BRAZILIAN MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Moreover, the dominance of big data analytics increasingly requires traditional diplomatic skillsets to be augmented with new ways of working such as social media communications expertise, an appreciation of the power of algorithms, as well as a proficiency in the personal use of newer technologies.

“ IT’S KIND OF THE NATURE OF THE BEAST REALLY. PEOPLE SELF-SELECT IN A WAY, AND YOU END UP WITH A CORE OF EMPLOYEES THAT ARE VERY MUCH OF THE SAME ILK, WHO YOU NEED TO MAKE AWARE OF THE POTENTIAL OF DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY. AND YOU HAVE TO SCHOOL THEM IN THE DIGITAL SKILLS THAT ARE NOT COMPLETELY THE OPPOSITE OF THEIR EXISTING SKILL SET, BUT RATHER COMPLEMENTARY TO IT. ”

WEIJER VERMEER
DUTCH MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

7. Powers and Kounalakis 2017

GLOBAL INDICES REMAIN POPULAR, DESPITE BEING SUBJECT TO CRITIQUE

The various multi-country indices, including the Nation Brand Index, Good Country Index, Soft Power 30 and others aim to rank countries in terms of their achievements, their assets, and other countries' perceptions of them. They are part of the arsenal of the PD community, albeit many actors express their reservations about their methodology. They essentially serve as proxy benchmarks for global presence.

“WE USE THEM TO SEE HOW WE'RE PERCEIVED BY OTHERS AND IF FOR SOME REASON YOU'VE SEEN, LET'S SAY, THAT THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF A PARTICULAR COUNTRY WENT FROM 25 TO 19, WE GO AND SPEAK TO THEM. WHAT ARE THEY DOING? WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM THEM?”

CLAUDIO GARON
BRAZILIAN MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Despite some reservations about their methodological approach and rigour, they have provided a locus around which different actors engage in different ways, and a platform and a currency around which dialogue is beginning to form. They serve both as a compass for identifying best practice, and as objects of productive critique. As a result, they are helping to foster increased engagement with questions relating to research methods, metrics and measurement.

“THERE'S ACTUALLY A NEED FOR US AS PUBLIC DIPLOMACY PROFESSIONALS TO ENGAGE WITH THESE PEOPLE … TO SAY: WE KNOW YOU USE AT LEAST 20 CRITERIA, BUT HAVE YOU THOUGHT THAT THIS OR THAT MIGHT BE MISSING OR MIGHT BE MISLEADING? WE RECOGNIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF THEM AND TRY TO WORK WITH THEM.”

RENE DINESEN
DANISH MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

DATA AND EVIDENCE WARRANT GREATER PRECISION AND SPECIFICITY

Research, Evaluation and Learning in PD are, as multiple participants attested, extremely challenging and complex areas of practice. Even the most advanced and innovative actors recognize their own shortcomings and are often subject to critique by observers outside the field. Despite these pressures, however, their efforts remain central to PD strategies and activities.

“WE TRY TO GIVE ANSWERS – HOW GOOD WERE WE AND WHERE ARE THE WEAKNESSES? ARE WE IN LINE WITH OUR STRATEGY? WHAT DO PARTNERS SAY? WE HAVE A MIX OF DIFFERENT TYPES OF DATA AND FEEDBACK, BUT STILL, IT'S NOT THAT EASY TO DO. SOMETIMES I WISH I WAS A TOURIST EXPERT BECAUSE THEN I COULD SAY WE SOLD 3% MORE BAGS IN WINTER SEASON THAN LAST YEAR. THIS IS NOT POSSIBLE FOR PUBLIC DIPLOMACY. SO, THIS IS THE WEAK POINT, AND IT'S ALSO THE SAME POINT WHERE PUBLIC DIPLOMACY UNITS ARE ATTACKED: ON THE LEVEL OF MEASURING AND DELINEATION.”

PETER FANKHAUSER
PRESENCE SWITZERLAND

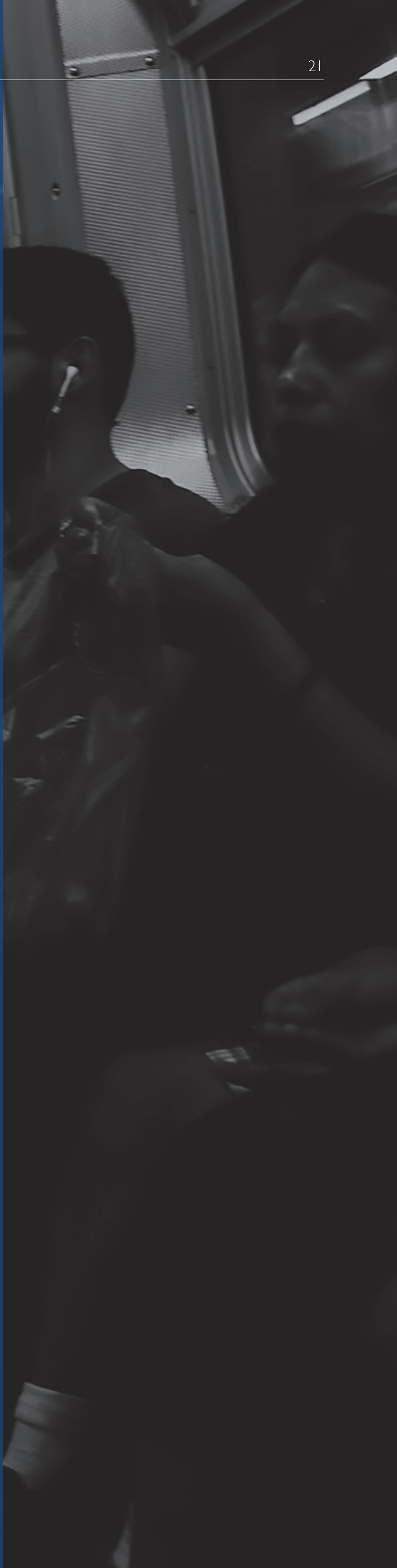
Only by constantly refining methods for data gathering and sharing can public diplomacy actors continue to optimise their activities, evolve program designs, and build stakeholder confidence.

“I THINK WE CAN ALL BE BETTER AT EVALUATING… I THINK FOR MOST OF US, WHEN WE'RE OUT THERE, IT'S VERY MUCH ABOUT DOING, IT'S NOT SO MUCH ABOUT EVALUATING, SADLY. SO THE FIRST STEP IS TO BUILD THESE KNOWLEDGE AND RESEARCH UNITS, IN THE MINISTRIES TO BEGIN WITH, AND THEN LATER PUSH THEM OUT TO THE ORGANIZATION.”

LINA EIDMARK
SWEDISH MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS


SLEEP ON IT.
LOUNGE ON IT.
DREAM ON IT.
8 ST

RESEARCH 2



KEY FINDINGS:

- Countries are targeting an increasingly diverse set of audiences with greater precision and profiling.
- There is a breadth of approaches and research methods being employed to gather audience data from different target audience groups.
- There is a complementary body of research that is informing PD interventions, that is defined more by the methods employed rather than purely by the target audience.
- There is limited evidence that key actors are going beyond digital 'vanity' metrics in their formative research efforts on digital engagement.

RESEARCH

Three overlapping categories of research were identified as informing public diplomacy activities, including audience research, methods-defined research and approaches to digital data gathering.

INCREASINGLY DIVERSE RANGE OF AUDIENCE GROUPS

Traditionally, three audience groups dominated the public diplomacy space: foreign general publics; the media; and emerging and established opinion leaders and decision makers. However, new audiences are being targeted, including domestic general publics; a more diverse range of subgroups of young people; trans-border groups; strategic stakeholders like local and international Non-Governmental Organizations as well as Civil Society Organizations; and key private sector actors. Table 1 outlines the range of quantitative, qualitative and digital methods that are currently employed to gather data from the seven audience categories identified.

Table 1
AUDIENCE RESEARCH

AUDIENCE	QUANT
Domestic General Publics	• Telephone survey: representative, randomly selected sample • Secondary data analysis
Foreign General Publics	• Online survey: self-selecting sample • Online survey: panel computer-assisted web interviews • Secondary data analysis
Young People	• Household, face-to-face survey: disproportionate, multi-stage random sample • Online survey: representative sample • Computer-assisted telephone interviews: representative sample • Secondary data analysis
Media	
Strategic Stakeholders	
Key Private Sector Players	• Monitoring of sector-specific knowledge, technology and trends • Partner search and matchmaking • Secondary data analysis
Trans-border Groups	• Telephone survey: bespoke sampling frame based on commercial databases • Online survey: bespoke sampling frame based on commercial databases • Ex-ante/ex-post psychometric survey: large-scale sample • Secondary data analysis

QUAL	DIGITAL
• Focus groups • Citizen consultations	• Social media monitoring and analysis
• Focus groups	• Social media monitoring and analysis • Big data analysis • Website audience tracking
• Semi-structured interviews • In-depth interviews (one-to-ones) • Focus groups • Participatory research methods • Life histories • Stakeholder interviews • Expert interviews	• Social media monitoring and analysis • Website audience tracking
• Content monitoring	• Digital content monitoring and analysis
• In-depth interviews • Stakeholder sessions	• Social media network analysis
• Partner interviews and profiling	• Digital content monitoring and analysis
• Asynchronous online interviews • Online interviews • Telephone interviews • Face-to-face interviews • Focus groups • Workshops	• Social media monitoring and analysis • Website audience tracking

FOREIGN POPULATIONS

The populations of foreign countries remain a staple target audience for research, where the audience category is generic and typically refers to the general public of a host country.

❝ WE SURVEYED CITIZENS OF COUNTRIES, TO UNDERSTAND THEIR PERCEPTIONS AND TO MATCH THESE TO POLICY PRIORITIES IN ORDER TO HAVE GOOD PUBLIC DIPLOMACY ACTIVITIES. ❞

WALTER ZAMPIERI
EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Studies focus both on gauging current awareness and attitudes towards the initiating country, and on developing future strategy informed by insights into audience needs and behaviours. These studies, therefore, provide both short-term, tactical insights related to current trends and longer-term strategic insights for building a country's image in host countries. For example, the Swedish Institute have designed an elaborate, ongoing program of online panel studies, embedded within a wider research program to understand and monitor Sweden's image globally (see Example 3).[8]

8. See also Cull's definition of "listening" in PD (2008, 32)

DOMESTIC POPULATIONS

Domestic audiences are regarded as an increasingly important target audience for public diplomacy activities and research among some key players.

❝ WE TEND TO FORGET THAT PUBLIC DIPLOMACY IS NOT ONLY GEARED TOWARDS THE OUTSIDE. IT HAS TO EXPLAIN PUBLIC POLICY TO ITS OWN CITIZENS. ❞

ANDRES ORTEGA
ROYAL ELCANO INSTITUTE

There are two key reasons for the emergence of this interest in domestic audiences. First, self-preservation and public duty – a climate of global austerity and growing local distrust around public spending means PD actors must increasingly be aware of and engage with audiences at home. Second, leveraging strategic advantage – global conditions of mass mobility and instant communications online have transformed a country's citizenry into its potentially most omnipresent and impactful envoy.

❝ NOW THE DOMESTIC AUDIENCES ARE INCREASINGLY SEEN AS EFFECTIVE VEHICLES OF NURTURING RELATIONSHIPS ABROAD. YOU ONLY HAVE TO GO TO AN AIRPORT TO REALIZE WHERE THE MOST IMPORTANT AMBASSADORS ARE - NOT INSIDE EMBASSIES, BUT EVERYWHERE AND IN PRINCIPLE, EVERYBODY. ❞

JAN MELISSEN
CLINGENDAEL INSTITUTE

The need to engage in a direct and meaningful way with domestic audiences is reflected in the example of the German citizen consultation initiative Außenpolitik Live or Foreign Policy Live (see Example 2). By creating opportunities for dialogue between Federal Foreign Office (FFO) staff and diplomats and domestic audiences, this multi-format initiative provides qualitative insights which are direct, collaborative and informative simultaneously. Effective domestic engagement strategies are not simply a repackaging of content and messaging produced for foreign audiences, but rather programs designed to empower domestic citizens to become more capable citizen ambassadors both at home and abroad.

YOUNG PEOPLE

The strategic importance of young people is reflected both in the greater levels of investment in deep qualitative assessment, and in the refinement of targeting various youth sub-groups.

“FOR INSTANCE, WE ARE WORKING WITH THE UK AT THE YOUTH LEVEL AND TRYING TO BUILD BRIDGES WITH STUDENTS SPECIALIZING IN BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS. IN SOME YEARS WE WILL PROBABLY WITNESS THE ESTABLISHMENT OF ECONOMIC COOPERATION INSPIRED BY THE YOUTH CONTACTS, SOME BILATERAL INSTITUTIONS, BUSINESS DEALS, AND SO ON. WITH SOME TIME, WE CAN MEASURE THE RESULTS.”

ROMAN CHUKOV
RUSSIAN CENTRE FOR PROMOTION OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Research objectives include identifying motivations for overseas travel, study and (future) investment; personal aspirations; perceived barriers to fulfilment; and desired policy changes. As such, they reflect PD’s interest in both attracting visitors, students and investment to an initiator country, and in investing in overseas development as a means of generating awareness and favourable attitudes in target populations abroad.

While future leaders in key areas such as business and politics are a longstanding audience of the PD sector, the range of research activities is not limited to these audiences. The British Council (see Examples 4 and 21), for example, broadly defines the category of young people to include 4 to 30 year olds. The organization has a specific interest in key youth sub-groups: including women and girls; those likely to travel; those affected by violence; and activists. This illustrates the increasing refinement and precision of audience targeting and segmentation within the broader category of youth.

MEDIA

The media as an institution continues to be viewed as an important influence on the attitudes and perception of the general public, as well as a vehicle for understanding the positions of opinion leaders, policy- and decision-makers. Media monitoring is, therefore, a common method employed by PD actors. Research approaches vary from continuous local media monitoring by embassies to data gathering of national media by multi-media surveillance operations like BBC Monitoring (see Example 5).

“OUR OBJECTIVE WAS TO INFLUENCE THE INFLUENCERS… WE LOOKED AT THE DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENSE’S MEDIA, WHAT KIND OF MEDIA THEY TRACK TO KEEP THEIR PR TEAM GOING, AND TAILORED OUR OUTREACH TO THAT.”

MATTHEW PRESTON
CANADIAN GLOBAL AFFAIRS INSTITUTE

In addition, individual media houses and journalists are also an important constituency for the PD sector and are targeted as important stakeholders for advancing specific PD objectives.

STRATEGIC STAKEHOLDERS

In addition to stakeholders in the media sector, new collaborative approaches to PD require actors to understand the values and goals of other potential partners and how to optimize engagement with them. Jointly led by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the City of The Hague, The Hague Project Peace and Justice promotes The Hague as an international city of peace and justice; spreads and enriches knowledge in the fields of peace, justice, and security; and fosters dialogue and engagement with audiences on key themes around the world.

“PUBLIC DIPLOMACY IS THE DIPLOMAT'S ANSWER TO THE GROWING INTERCONNECTEDNESS AND THE EXPLOSION OF INFORMATION. [IT'S SUCCESS] DEPENDS ON PRACTITIONERS FORGING PRODUCTIVE CONNECTIONS WITHIN AND BETWEEN NETWORKS.”

INGRID DE BEER
DUTCH MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

To build a truly robust and inclusive network, the organizers of The Hague Peace and Justice network deployed a data gathering approach that prioritized alignment between stakeholders. This, in turn, rendered qualitative assessment of stakeholder values as an essential component of the network's formation, together with dialogue with stakeholders to determine how the network's activities could be made to align with their own goals (see Example 7).

TRANS-BORDER GROUPS

Refinement of audience targeting means actors are beginning to move away from generic audience classifications. Research into the motivations and characteristics of those most likely to engage in travel, overseas study and investment is an example of this trend and is currently being carried out by a variety of countries. Especially notable is the European Commission's study of the Erasmus Program - the EU's student exchange program – which employed psychometrics to analyse groups who had travelled internationally in comparison to groups who had not travelled, to determine key differences in personality traits and characteristics (see Example 6).

Global conditions of mass migration, especially of refugees and vulnerable groups, are also generating interest in motivating narratives and the development of effective communication strategies. The transient nature of these populations has warranted the development of more innovative research methods, to capture the expectations, aspirations and life experiences of trans-border groups. The German FFO's focus on migrants is a rich example of this work.[9]

“WE SET UP THE RUMOURS ABOUT GERMANY CAMPAIGN. IN ORDER TO SAY, WELL, WE DON'T WANT TO DETER PEOPLE, BUT WE NEED TO INFORM THEM, SO THAT EVERYBODY THAT THINKS ABOUT LEAVING FOR EUROPE DOES SO ON A LARGE FACT BASE WHICH IS AS OBJECTIVE AS POSSIBLE… AND WE HAVE A MAJOR RESPONSE RATE ON THAT WEBSITE. IT'S REALLY TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE NEEDS OF THE TARGET AUDIENCE.”

NIKLAS WAGNER
GERMAN FEDERAL FOREIGN OFFICE

9. See https://rumoursaboutgermany.info/

PRIVATE SECTOR ENTITIES

New norms and advances in technology are putting pressure on the PD community to adapt. In addition, country narratives emphasizing principles of expertise, innovation and creativity mean that actors are increasingly motivated to engage directly with key players in the private sector.

“OUR RESEARCH IS ELEVATED AND GOOD IDEAS BECOME GREAT ONES WHEN WE COLLABORATE WITH THE BEST IN THE WORLD. AN INNOVATION CENTRE IN BOSTON WILL REDUCE THE DISTANCE BETWEEN DENMARK AND THE USA SO THAT WE CAN CREATE THE RIGHT KINDS OF CONTACTS.”

“THE CENTRE WILL GIVE AMBITIOUS DANISH START-UPS AND GROWTH COMPANIES VALUABLE ACCESS TO PARTNERS AND FINANCING, SO THAT THEY CAN BE THE DANISH EXPORT SUCCESS STORIES OF TOMORROW.”

SØREN PIND AND ANDERS SAMUELSEN.
DANISH MINISTERS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION AND SCIENCE AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS[10]

10. ICDK 2018

For example, the Danish Innovation Centres (ICDKs) are a set of unique diplomatic missions jointly overseen by the Danish Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Higher Education and Science that provide direct access to the technology, research and innovation sectors in key locations globally. Eight centres currently exist around the world, providing targeted networking opportunities, in-depth knowledge of local markets, and the opportunity to promote Denmark as a technologically innovative and forward-looking country. Part of their remit is to gather continuous data on businesses and commercial partners in each location to ensure that Denmark stays abreast of cutting-edge R&D innovations and opportunities globally (see Example 8).

METHODS-DEFINED RESEARCH

In addition to studies focused specifically on particular target audiences, PD actors are investing in research that can be differentiated more by the type of methods that are employed. These include public opinion studies; indices that track and rank countries; media content analysis; internal and external institutional assessments; social media architecture analysis and narrative mapping. These methods reflect recurrent research objectives common to the sector and are outlined in Table 2 below.

Table 2
METHODS-DEFINED RESEARCH

OBJECTIVE/AUDIENCE	METHODS/DESIGN	EXAMPLE
1. Public Opinion: To understand the diversity of domestic public opinion in regard to a foreign country	Triangulation of multiple public opinion polls, comparing questions, responses and samples	Canadian Public Policy Forum (see Example 9)
2. Tracking and ranking: To track perceptions of multiple countries across multiple countries on a range of attributes (trust, attractiveness, democracy etc.)	Annual national survey in multiple countries	Nation Brand Index (see Example 10)
	Secondary factual data analysis	Good Country Index
	1. Annual national survey in multiple countries 2. Secondary factual data analysis	Soft Power 30 Index
	Mixed-method: 1. Secondary factual data analysis 2. Internal self-evaluation sessions 3. Survey 4. Qualitative methods	Creative Cities Index
	Annual national survey in multiple countries	Country RepTrak
3. Media coverage: To identify the amount and nature of media coverage of issues, events and personalities	Content analysis using standardized and bespoke coding frames	Media Tenor (see Example 11)
4. Internal assessment: Capture quantitative and qualitative assessment of how a government and its policies are perceived by internal actors and publics	**4 Streams** 1. Standard tracker – twice annual survey, face-to-face interviews 2. Flash studies – ad-hoc thematic telephone surveys 3. Special studies – in-depth thematic studies, integrated into standard tracker waves 4. In-depth qualitative – ad-hoc or follow-up focus groups	Eurobarometer instruments (see example 12)
5. External assessment: To capture quantitative and qualitative assessment of how a government and its policies are perceived by external actors and publics	**Mixed method:** 1. Literature review 2. Media analysis (over 3 months) 3. Social media analysis (event-specific) 4. Survey 5. Non-representative expert and elite interviews	EU Perception study (see Example 13)
6. Social media architecture: To identify amount, nature and structure of textual and visual narrative activity online	1. Social media analytics 2. Digital network mapping and analysis 3. Semiotic analysis (text and image)	M&C Saatchi World Services (see Example 14)
7. Narrative mapping: To understand the narratives about a country currently present in the digital sphere	1. 60 million open sources in English were included in the initial analysis 2. Big data narrative studies are set to continue, but across six languages	MFA Sweden (see Example 15)

DIGITAL RESEARCH METHODS

The PD community remains at an embryonic stage in the development of its digital research, data analytics and insights practice. Digital data are more commonly recognized as part of the currency to monitor progress towards achievement of PD objectives, rather than as evidence to inform PD strategies.

> “BIG DATA MEASURES, FOR EXAMPLE: OF COURSE, THERE IS SOFTWARE WHICH WE COULD USE IN THE FUTURE TO BETTER UNDERSTAND TARGET GROUPS AND INFLUENCES IN THE SOCIAL MEDIA. WE ARE VERY MUCH AWARE OF THIS, BUT THIS IS A FIELD WE HAVE YET TO EXPLORE.”
>
> SEBASTIAN KORBER
> GERMAN INSTITUTE FOR FOREIGN CULTURAL RELATIONS

The significant differences between social media and other web platforms tend to be underestimated by PD actors. There is a tendency to refer to ‘social media’, ‘network analysis’ and ‘big data’ without acknowledging how different research methods are accommodated by different platforms, or of the differences in the culture of use of each individual platform. This presents two potential problems.

First, it can lead actors to focus narrowly on one platform (or a limited group of platforms) only. The Soft Power 30 Index, for example, used Facebook as its sole source of digital data for its 2017 report.[11] There may be a missed opportunity here to employ research methods that are tailored to the design and infrastructure of different digital platforms, reaching different audiences, and consequently generating a set of complementary and broad-based insights.

11. McClory 2017, 143

Second, distinct user and device cultures mean that even ostensibly common actions such as ‘likes’ and ‘hashtags’ cannot necessarily be treated as equivalent. For actors to study the development of movements, issues, and debates across multiple platforms, a greater appreciation of their differences is warranted.

Further details on the evaluation methods employing digital data identified are presented in the Evaluation and Metrics sections below.

3 EVALUATION IN THEORY

KEY FINDINGS:

- There are widespread and varied evaluation efforts to capture evidence of the relative success of PD strategies and activities.
- Effective evaluation of PD strategies and activities, however, is being hindered by four factors:
  - The absence of a clear articulation of the relationship between PD activities and a range of political and economic outcomes that are in the national interest. Such a theory of change would inform how different metrics constitute key steps in the journey to impact.
  - The field is dominated by short-term and results-driven agendas that are inadequate to account for the long-term nature of certain influence campaigns and programs.
  - PD actors are often using different measures to evaluate the same interventions.
  - Most PD actors do not employ common strategic measures across different types of activities within the same organization or across organizations within the same country.

EVALUATION IN THEORY

Within the PD community, there is a growing body of evidence which demonstrates the positive impact of 'soft power' in general. By creatively constructing new variables drawing on existing secondary data sets, studies such as JP Singh' and Stuart MacDonald's Soft Power Today (2017) – the first cross-country quantitative study of its kind - evidence the value of investing in assets such as cultural institutions and links with other countries (see Example 17). However, despite the growing evidence that soft power works, efforts based on primary data to evaluate PD activities designed to optimize that power remain underdeveloped.

In regard to the evaluation of actual PD activities, there is a clear need to integrate project evaluations as part of a long-term strategy, and to invest in stable, integrated frameworks for the monitoring and evaluation of organizational and program performance. This requires committed resources, standardized reporting, and integrated, long-term monitoring of target audiences. Dialogue with stakeholders and participants is also needed to ensure effective evolution of project designs.

“ IT'S ABOUT THE CLIMATE RATHER THAN THE WEATHER. THE WEATHER HAPPENS EVERY DAY, BUT THE CLIMATE IS ABOUT MUCH MORE ELEMENTS COMBINING. IMAGE MONITORING, PUBLIC DIPLOMACY: IT'S NOT SOMETHING FOR TODAY OR TOMORROW; IT'S ALL IN A LONG-TERM PERSPECTIVE. ”

PETER FANKHAUSER
PRESENCE SWITZERLAND

Presence Switzerland, DFAT, The British Council, and The Goethe Institute provide case examples of best practice in PD evaluation (see Examples 19, 20, 21, and 22). The four common evaluation challenges described below have been tackled in unique ways by these leading organizations.

CHALLENGES

Four challenges were identified that hinder effective evaluation of PD:

1. THE JOURNEY TO IMPACT

As a practice area, PD is intended to impact on political and economic outcomes that are in the national interest. Tracing the relationship between the frequency, amount and nature of PD activities and these material outcomes is a complex, resource-intensive and challenging process. Consequently, data gathering and analysis designed to capture the impact of PD must aim to include measures of political and economic impact in addition to the communication outputs and outcomes currently favoured by most practitioners in the field.

Further, despite the depth of knowledge of the theory and practice of public diplomacy, with few exceptions, there is little evidence of organizations implementing theories of change to inform how different metrics constitute key steps in the journey to impact. A theory of change is a comprehensive description and illustration of how and why a desired change is expected to happen in a particular context. For PD, evidence of shifting communication metrics is necessary but not sufficient to achieve the ultimate political and economic goals that are in the national interest.

“ I GUESS THE PROBLEM WAS THAT IF OUR OBJECTIVE WAS TO SHAPE PERCEPTIONS, JUST KNOWING HOW MANY TURNED UP IN FILM FESTIVALS OR HOW MANY MEDIA ARTICLES ARE PUBLISHED IS MODESTLY USEFUL, BUT IT DOESN'T GET TO THE HEART OF WHAT WE'RE TRYING TO ACHIEVE. WE DID GATHER AND DOCUMENT THOSE METRICS, BUT THEY REALLY WERE JUST THE METRICS THAT WERE ACCESSIBLE TO US. ”

ANDREW BYRNE
AUSTRALIAN DFAT

Understanding of what constitutes thresholds of success is underdeveloped. This makes it difficult for actors to know what to measure, how to interpret the results, and how to track progress. It also means that evaluations often lack a strategic focus, with actors left unsure about the relationship between short-term results and long-term objectives.

“IN A WAY, THERE IS A QUESTION ABOUT HOW FAR SOME SIMPLE DIGITAL METRICS CAN TAKE YOU IN CULTURAL RELATIONS, BECAUSE WE'RE ALL ABOUT RELATIONSHIPS AND TRUST. CAN YOU REALLY GET DEEP RELATIONSHIPS AND TRUST FROM SOCIAL MEDIA? TO A POINT, MAYBE, BUT I DON'T KNOW. THIS WORKS BEST WHEN YOU HAVE A COMBINATION OF DIGITAL AND FACE-TO-FACE WORKING TOGETHER SEAMLESSLY TO ENGAGE PEOPLE, OR WHEN YOU ARE USING DIGITAL TO REALLY BUILD LASTING RELATIONSHIPS OR TO OPEN UP LONGER TERM AVENUES OF CONNECTION RATHER THAN JUST FOCUSING ON IMMEDIATE ONLINE REACH ALONE.”

JOHN DUBBER
BRITISH COUNCIL

This is especially true of measures of digital reach and engagement. Actors are relying on equating success with simple measures of volume and frequency of interactions, without knowing whether or how that advances the achievement of their objectives. Underlying this equation are assumptions about the purpose of digital diplomacy, centering on self-presentation and promotion. This is, however, only one possible definition of success.

For example, there are a number of PD strategies that seek to align a country with specific issues, such as Sweden's commitment to promoting global sexual and reproductive health and rights (see Example 28). Such strategies could be more effectively measured using innovative metrics for studying issues online across multiple platforms simultaneously. To this end, several projects by the Digital Methods Initiative (DMI) at the University of Amsterdam demonstrate ways of measuring an actor's impact on a specific issue online, assessing, for example, their relative dominance in respect to the issue, or the extent to which the positions of others align with their own (see Example 18).

2. SHORT-TERM AND RESULTS-DRIVEN AGENDAS

Scarcity of resources, the unpredictability of political influence and acute awareness of the challenges of attribution mean that actors are often not motivated to commit long-term to evaluation programs that measure changes over time.

“THE ATMOSPHERE OF HIGH UNCERTAINTY IN THE WESTERN POLITICAL SPHERE IS NOT GOOD FOR FUNDING INTANGIBLE PROJECTS TO DO WITH PUBLIC DIPLOMACY. GOVERNMENTS WANT RESULTS, ECONOMIC DIPLOMACY IS KING, AND NONE OF THAT LENDS TO THIS SORT OF EFFORT.”

ALEX OLIVER
LOWY INSTITUTE

This makes it impossible to demonstrate lasting impact. It also prevents actors from identifying barriers to success lying beyond the immediate horizons of projects. In addition, it fosters an expedient focus on quick and cost-effective reporting, predominantly on the reach of outputs. Without investment in a framework signifying these measures, such reports lack wider or long-term relevance. At the same time, the relative ease of gathering broad-based, quantitative data on outputs draws attention away from a focus on developing actionable insights on immediate and intermediate outcomes, drawn from deep qualitative methods with specific target audiences.

“WE SAY: ‘YEAH, THAT VIDEO HAS BEEN SEEN ONE MILLION TIMES. THAT’S A GOOD RESULT.’ BUT WE DON’T REALLY KNOW. IS THAT A GOOD RESULT? WHO WERE THESE 100 MILLION PEOPLE WHO SAW THE MOVIE? I THINK WE HAVE A TENDENCY TO MAYBE OVERESTIMATE THE RESULTS OF OUR INITIATIVES BECAUSE WE’RE MEASURING OURSELVES.”

LINA EIDMARK
SWEDISH MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

3. SAME ACTIVITY, DIFFERENT MEASURES

Actors are using different measures to evaluate the same interventions. This phenomenon is particularly pronounced within the evaluation of exchange and scholarship programs. Whereas the European Commission’s evaluation of their Erasmus program (see Example 6) prioritizes employability measures, an evaluation of the UK’s Chevening program focusses on perception changes, the transference of views to others, and on financial returns (see Example 18). DFAT’s evaluation of the Australia Awards program, meanwhile, considers all the above and more. It includes measures of the reach and quality of outputs; uses a range of indicators for measuring continued engagement with Australia; and includes a much wider range of indicators of the transference of skills and views (see Example 20). The range of metrics and measures being applied is evidence of the implicit disharmony about what success looks like in respect to similar public diplomacy activities.

4. DIFFERENT MEASURES, DIFFERENT ACTIVITIES

The key to a robust evaluation is employing valid and reliable measures that accurately reflect the range of interests of key stakeholders invested in a particular PD activity. This requires the development of a set of bespoke metrics that reflect the specific sectoral interests of those invested in the PD activity or intervention, over and above the core set of communication outcomes.[12]

At the same time, most PD actors do not employ common strategic measures across different types of activities within the same organization or across organizations within the same country. The absence of a shared evaluation framework makes it difficult to build and track common and bespoke metrics of success across a diversity of programs and activities. The British Council is, however, exceptional in this respect. Despite operating in 110 countries across a wide range of sectors and with many partners simultaneously, all evaluations collect data on the same eight results areas. Those areas, in turn, are aligned with the Council's five overarching strategic objectives (see Example 21).

12. See Pamment's chapter 'Discussion: Evidence of Success?' (2016, 236-238) for the need for PD actors to be responsive to the norms and expectations of a range of stakeholders.


NEW YORK
ENTRANCE

METRICS IN PRACTICE 4

KEY FINDINGS:

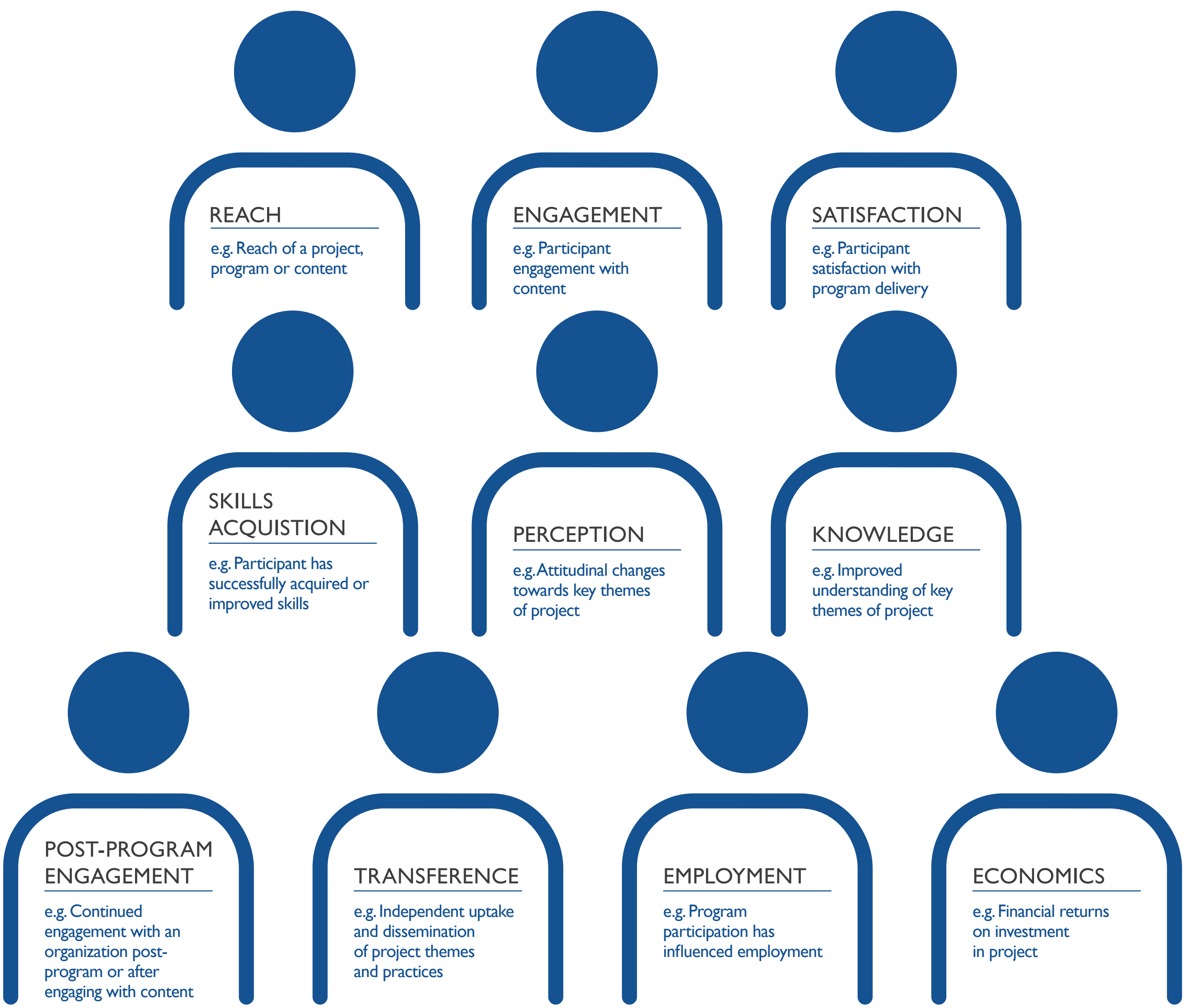
- An array of metrics is currently being employed by actors in the PD community. However, with few exceptions, actors and organizations do not clearly articulate the relative position of different variables within a journey to impact or a theory of change.
- Collection of reach data is widespread, but only infrequently carried out in a strategic manner.
- Engagement and satisfaction measures are commonly used to measure quality of outputs.
- Immediate outcome measurements focus on changes in participants' perception, knowledge of project themes, and/or whether they have acquired specific skills.
- There are limited examples where results are correlated with monitoring and analysis of target groups over time to demonstrate wider and lasting impact.
- Intermediate outcome measures, in particular, reflect the diversity of objectives currently being pursued by different actors in a range of sectors, including education, employment, and the arts.
- Different actors are measuring intermediate outcomes at hugely varying time periods after an intervention or activity, from one month to ten years.

CURRENT PD METRICS

There are widespread and varied efforts to capture evidence attributable to PD strategies and activities. These have produced an array of metrics that organizations across the world are employing to measure PD. It is important that theories of change are first developed with a strong and sustained emphasis on the objectives of the activity at hand. This affords the opportunity to develop a broad set of metrics within a singular theory of change, without compromising the requirement to develop a set of tailored metrics and indicators specific to a particular PD activity or intervention.

The metrics identified can be clustered into three categories: outputs, immediate outcomes and intermediate outcomes. The actual measures include a range of variables, from intervention exposure to knowledge, attitudes and self-reported behaviour; to economic investment. These metrics are illustrated in Diagram 2 below.

Diagram 2
METRICS AUDIT



It is important that actors invest in data collection across all three categories to ensure that evaluations are exhaustive and useful both in terms of making immediate, tactical changes to project designs as well as tracking progress towards long-term goals. Table 3 identifies the metrics that fall into each category. It is notable that data on both knowledge and perceptions are gathered as metrics of both immediate and intermediate outcomes.

Table 3
KEY METRICS

CATEGORY	METRICS
Outputs	Reach
	Engagement
	Satisfaction
Immediate outcomes	Skills Acquisition
	Perception
	Knowledge
Intermediate outcomes	Post-program Engagement
	Perception
	Knowledge
	Transference
	Employment
	Economics

OUTPUTS

In the outputs category (see Table 4), actors are gathering a wide range of reach data, including: the number of activities held, the number of individuals reached, the number of resources distributed, and the number of professionals and organizations worked with. These data are commonly analyzed from a demographic and regional perspective, to understand the profile and location of audiences reached.

In respect of the strategic collection of reach data, the British Council's; Results and Evidence Framework (see Example 21) illustrates a best-in-class approach. This framework uses eight clearly defined results areas to ensure consistent data collection across all regions and business units. As a result, all reach counts are explicitly defined in relation to the long-term objectives of the Council as a whole, as opposed to merely demonstrating the reach of an isolated project.

To measure the quality of outputs, actors are employing a variety of engagement and satisfaction measures. In terms of individual projects and initiatives, engagement is the less consistently measured of the two metrics. The Goethe Institute, however, regularly utilizes participant observation methods to assess the interactions of participants with a given project. In terms of long-term programs such as the Australia Awards program, engagement is being measured by counting the number of interactions between a participant and stakeholders external to the immediate program, for example. This, in turn, leads to initial measures of the success of the program in fostering networks.

Satisfaction data are gathered from various target groups, from engaged stakeholders such as participating artists or museum curators to project staff and management. This involves a variety of methods, from quick exit surveys and questionnaires to focus groups and interviews to provide more in-depth qualitative assessments. The Goethe Institute, in particular, demonstrates a strong commitment to employing a range of qualitative methods to capture satisfaction (see Example 22).

Longer-term participatory programs also afford opportunities for a sequence of assessments: on arrival, during the program itself, and on departure. For example, DFAT's Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for the Australia Awards program (see Example 20) provides a best-in-class example in terms of its continuous monitoring of the quality of outputs. Arrival and on-award surveys provide management with a wealth of data for improving the program over time.

Table 4
OUTPUTS – REACH, ENGAGEMENT AND SATISFACTION

METRIC	MEASURES	METHOD	AUDIENCE/ SOURCE OF DATA	EXAMPLE REFERENCE
Reach	Number of events (e.g. number of filmscreenings)	Counting	Event records	British Council: Corporate Plan 2017-2020 (Five Films for Freedom case study)
	Number of participants	Counting	Event records	Goethe Institute: Annual Report
	Number of materials/resources distributed (e.g. language course books)	Counting	Event records	Goethe Institute: Annual Report
	Number of participating actors (e.g artists and curators)	Counting	Event records	British Council: Results and Evidence Framework
	Number of partner organizations and institutions involved (e.g. HE institutions)	Counting	Event records	British Council: Results and Evidence Framework
Engagement	Amount of networking at event (e.g. number of connections made by participant during program) – self-reported	Exit survey	Participants	DFAT: Australia Awards: Global Monitoring and Evaluation Framework
	Amount of networking at event (e.g. contact between partner organization and participants) – self-reported	Follow-up survey (FU survey)	Partner organizations	DFAT: Australia Awards: Global Monitoring and Evaluation Framework
	Involvement in dicussion (e.g. number of questions asked by participant) – observed	Participant observation by experts	Participants	Goethe Institute: Culture Works (Identity.Move! case study)
	% of participants who completed program	Post-event customer database consultation	Event records	DFAT: Australia Awards: Global Monitoring and Evaluation Framework
	Opt-ins for further communication	Post-event customer database consultation	Event records	British Council: Achieving Impact
Satisfaction	Positive experience of event (e.g. customer satisfaction) – self-reported	BME (Baseline, Midline, Endline) survey, exit survey, interview, focus group	Participants	British Council: Results and Evidence Framework
	Positive experience of event (e.g. customer satisfaction) – self-reported	BME survey, exit survey, interview, focus group	Project staff	British Council: Results and Evidence Framework
	Quality of program delivery (e.g. participant / stakeholder satisfaction with format of event) – self-reported	BME survey, exit survey, interview, focus group	Participants	Goethe Institute: Culture Works (Urban Places-Public Spaces case study)
	Quality of program delivery (e.g. staff satisfaction with format of event) – self-reported	BME survey, exit survey, interview, focus group	Project staff/management, local and sectoral stakeholders	Goethe Institute: Culture Works (Urban Places-Public Spaces case study)
	Quality of resources (e.g. marketing materials, exhibition guides, teaching resources) – self-reported	BME survey, exit survey, interview, focus group	Participants	British Council: Results and Evidence Framework
	Quality of resources (e.g. marketing materials, exhibition guides, teaching resources) – self-reported	BME survey, exit survey, interview, focus group	Project staff/management local and sectoral stakeholders	British Council: Results and Evidence Framework

IMMEDIATE OUTCOMES

In the immediate outcomes category (see Table 5), actors are measuring changes in perception, knowledge, and skills acquisition. These measures reflect whether a project or program has been successful in impacting any of these metrics in the short term, with data gathered very soon after the intervention itself. Best-in-class actors are embedding the results of these immediate evaluations within a wider program of ongoing monitoring and analysis of target groups. Well-defined and circulated strategies identifying priority areas for communication and long-term objectives, meanwhile, ensure that immediate outcome measures are aligned with long-term goals.

The Swiss Federal Council's current four-year Strategy for Communication Abroad (see Example 19), for example, outlines a program that provides the optimal combination of iterative data gathering on multiple activities that are aligned with long-term strategic objectives. Moreover, by augmenting these data with data gathered through its monitoring of issues and country image, it is possible for the Swiss to recalibrate activities to ensure that they are contributing positively to the long-term vision for the country.

Table 5

IMMEDIATE OUTCOMES – PERCEPTION, KNOWLEDGE & SKILLS ACQUISITION

METRIC	MEASURES
Perception	Positive attitudes towards project themes (e.g. participant recognizes country as technologically innovative) – self-reported
	Positive attitudes towards project organizer (e.g. agreement that the organizer is creative, up-to-date, and forward looking)
	Positive coverage by local media
Knowledge	Increased understanding of project themes (e.g. participation has broadened knowledge of host country culture) – self-reported
	Improved test scores
	Improved knowledge of professional field/area of expertise (e.g. program training introduced participant to new research) – self-reported
Skills Acquisition	New/improved skills (e.g. soft skills) – self-reported
	Improved test scores (e.g. language skills) – self-reported
	% of participants achieving pass grades
	Positive attitudes towards skills acquired (e.g. employers view skills as beneficial for hiring process) – self-reported
	Positive attitudes towards qualification – (e.g. employers regard awarding organization as trustworthy) – self-reported

METHOD	AUDIENCE/ SOURCE OF DATA	EXAMPLE REFERENCE
Exit survey, interview, focus group	Participants	Swiss Federal Council: Strategy for Communication Abroad 2016-2019
Exit survey, interview, focus group	Participants	British Council: Achieving Impact
Content monitoring and analysis	Media	Goethe Institute: Annual Report
Exit survey, interview, focus group	Participants	Swiss Federal Council: Strategy for Communication Abroad 2016-2019
Pre/post testing	Participants	British Council: Results and Evidence Framework
Exit survey, interview	Participating actors (e.g. artists)	British Council: Results and Evidence Framework
Exit survey, interview, focus group	Participants	Goethe Institute: Culture Works (Cultural Management case study)
Pre/post testing	Participants	British Council: Results and Evidence Framework
Testing	Participants	British Council: Results and Evidence Framework
Exit survey, interview, focus group	Local and sectoral stakeholders	European Commission: Erasmus Impact study
Exit survey, interview, focus group	Local and sectoral stakeholders	British Council: Results and Evidence Framework

INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES

Outcome measurements that take place after an intervening period since the project or since an individual participated in a program – intermediate outcomes - exhibit the widest range of metrics (see Table 6 below). Definitions of the intervening time-period range from less than a year to over ten years. However, these periods appear more often to be accidental rather than deliberate. The status of these measurements as intermediate or middle-term reflects the long-term perspective of PD, the ultimate goals of which – influence, attraction, mutual understanding, and the maximization and optimization of soft power – are by definition, interminable.

In terms of an inventory of metrics, actors are conducting measurements of perception, knowledge, transference, post-program engagement, employment and economic outcomes. The range of measures is a direct reflection of the range of objectives currently pursued by different actors. Perception and knowledge measures are consistent with PD models which emphasize the need to improve the awareness and favourability of overseas publics towards one's country.

Measures of post-program engagement reflect the desire to strengthen and increase the frequency of an individual's connections with the country, as well as develop multiple routes for networks to form. Transference is the measure of the independent uptake, reproduction and dissemination of an intervention's themes, content and/or practices and relates to the desire to achieve impact on the local culture itself, and to ensure the sustainability of that impact.

Employment measures reflect, on the one hand, a desire to improve the material circumstances of participants, but also to increase influence over time by building connections with members of overseas professionals in key sectors such as business, culture, and development. Economic measures, finally, help ensure that public diplomacy actors are delivering economic value and value for money and contributing to the economic advancement of one's country.

Table 6
INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES – POST-PROGRAM ENGAGEMENT, PERCEPTION & KNOWLEDGE

METRIC	MEASURES	METHOD	AUDIENCE/ SOURCE OF DATA	EXAMPLE REFERENCE
Post-program Engagement	Number of returning participants (e.g. participation in follow-up event; number of participants who participate in follow-up research)	FU survey (follow-up survey)	Participants	DFAT: Australia Awards: Global Monitoring and Evaluation Framework
	Number of returning participants (e.g. participation in cross-country R&D projects)	Customer database monitoring	Participants	Evaluation of the Danish Innovation Centres
	Amount of networking post-event (e.g. frequency of contact with fellow project participants; frequency of contact with initiator organization, project partners and stakeholders) – self-reported	FU survey, interview, focus group	Participants	DFAT: Australia Awards: Global Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (Tracer Survey tool)
	Number of independent partnerships between participating actors, partners and stakeholders (e.g. number of matches made between researchers and funders)	Activity monitoring by organization	Participating actors, partners, local and sectoral stakeholders	Swiss Federal Council: Strategy for Communication Abroad 2016-2019 (Issue Monitoring)
Perception	Changes in attitudes towards project themes over time – self-reported	Attitudes tracker	Participants	DFAT: Australia Awards: Global Monitoring and Evaluation Framework
	Changes in attitudes towards project themes over time – self-reported	Attitudes tracker	Population sample (community, regional, national)	Swiss Federal Council: Strategy for Communication Abroad 2016-2019 (Issue Monitoring)
	Changes in attitudes towards project themes over time – self-reported	FU interviews/focus groups	Participants	Swiss Federal Council: Strategy for Communication Abroad 2016-2019 (Issue Monitoring)
	Changes in attitudes towards project themes over time – self-reported	FU interviews/focus groups	Local stakeholders and staff	DFAT: Australia Awards: Global Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (Tracer Survey tool)
	Changes in local media coverage of project themes over time	Content monitoring and analysis	Media	DFAT: Australia Awards: Global Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (Tracer Survey tool)
Knowledge	Changes in understanding of project themes over time – self-reported	Knowledge tracker	Participants	British Council: Results and Evidence Framework
	Changes in understanding of project themes over time – self-reported	Knowledge tracker	Population sample (community, region, national)	Swiss Federal Council: Strategy for Communication Abroad 2016-2019 (Image Monitoring)
	Improved engagement with knowledge institutions (e.g. girls and women have greater access to education)	FU survey, interview	Local and sector stakeholders	British Council Results and Evidence Framework
	Improved quality of education system (e.g. activities have resulted in positive education policy changes)	FU survey, interview	Local and sector stakeholders	British Council Results and Evidence Framework
	Improved understanding of local markets (e.g. R&D sector) – self-reported	FU survey, interview	Staff, partner, local and sectoral stakeholders	Evaluation of the Danish Innovation Centres

METRIC	MEASURES	METHOD	AUDIENCE/ SOURCE OF DATA	EXAMPLE REFERENCE
Transference	Number of independent follow-up activities organized	Activity monitoring by organization	Community, country, region	Goethe Institute: Culture Works (Urban Places-Public Spaces case study)
	Number of references to project themes in publications by local authors (e.g. cultural magazines; academic journals)	Content monitoring and analysis by organization	Local authors and academics	German Ifa
	Participant influence of opinions of others (e.g. presenting country as a place to travel/study) – self-reported	FU survey, interview, focus group	Participants	UkFCO: Chevening
	Skills and knowledge passed on to others – (e.g. transferred through personal professional network) – self-reported	FU survey, interview, focus group	Participants	Goethe Institute: Culture Works (Cultural Management case study)
	Learnt practices introduced to place of work (e.g. language teachers use new techniques in classroom) – self-reported	FU survey, interview, focus group	Participants	British Council Results and Evidence Framework
Employment	Positive impact on careers (e.g. participation viewed as helpful in finding a job) – self-reported	FU survey, interview, focus group	Participants	British Council Results and Evidence Framework
	Positive impact on job performance (e.g. skills gained viewed as helpful in the workplace) – self-reported	FU survey	Participants	European Commission: Erasmus Impact Study
	Positive impact on job performance (e.g. skills gained viewed as helpful in the workplace) – self-reported	FU survey	Local and sectoral stakeholders	European Commission: Erasmus Impact Study
	Employment rates – actual	Monitoring employment statistics	Community, regional, national	European Commission: Erasmus Impact Study
	Employment rates – actual or reported	Employment tracker	Participants	DFAT: Australia Awards: Global Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (Tracer Survey Tool)
	Jobs created in initiator country as a result of PD-motivated FDI (e.g. job creation through business investment by participants)	FU survey data analysis	Participants	UK FCO: Chevening
	More effective approaches to skills and enterprise development	FU survey, interviews	Partner organizations	British Council Results and Evidence Framework
Economic	Improved finanical wellbeing – self-reported	FU survey	Participants	British Council Results and Evidence Framework
	Direct expenditure/investment in initiator country by participant – self-reported	FU survey, interview	Participants	UK FCO: Chevening
	Indirect effects of direct expenditure by participant (e.g. value of increase of production in supply chain as a result of purchase of goods increases)	FU survey data analysis	Participants	UK FCO: Chevening
	Induced effects of direct investment by participant (e.g. spending of wages earned as a result of buisness investment by participant)	FU survey data anaylsis	Participants	UK FCO: Chevening
	Proportion of FDI, tourist and student spend attributable to project	Secondary data analysis	National trade and tourism statistics	NAO: Exploiting the UK Brand Overseas
	Number and value of trade deals made as a result of project – actual or reported	FU survey, interview	Participants cum trade partners	British Council: Corporate Plan 2017-2020 (UK-China Year of Cultural Exchange case study)
	Sector-specific infrastructure (e.g. arts in host country) strengthened	FU survey, interview	Sectoral stakeholders	British Council: Results and Evidence Framework
	Business unit earnings (annual)	Internal data analysis	Business unit financial records	Evaluation of the Danish Innovation Centres
	Return on investment (annual)	Internal data analysis	Business unit financial records	Evaluation of the Danish Innovation Centres
	Number of organization clients	Internal data analysis	Business unit financial records	Evaluation of the Danish Innovation Centres
	% increase in organization clients (annual)	Internal data analysis	Business unit financial records	Evaluation of the Danish Innovation Centres

MEASURING DIGITAL DIPLOMACY

Currently, public diplomacy evaluations are failing to take account of the breadth of possibilities presented by digital data analytics. The collection of so-called 'vanity' metrics is widespread, with actors monitoring the reach and engagement of their social media profiles and website pages using API-specific indicators such as likes, comments and friends (Facebook); retweets, @mentions and followers (Twitter); subscribers and views (YouTube); followers, likes and comments (Instagram) (see Table 7). As used in the 'vanity' model, these metrics indicate the popularity of a page/profile, a video, or a post, with popularity treated as a measure of overall success. The implication of this approach is that digital diplomacy efforts are configured to achieve the greatest number of likes and comments, and to increase popularity over time.

Diplomacy.Live, a digital diplomacy research project run by the Istanbul Centre for Digital Affairs, is exceptional in terms of the range of digital assets it identifies. It exemplifies the important role that 'vanity' metrics currently play within the community. The project aggregates digital data in order to rank countries, senior political figures, organizations and local missions according to their ability to attract positive engagement from online publics. In addition, it adopts an inclusive definition of what constitutes a 'digital asset'. This definition includes: all online pages,

Table 7 DIGITAL 'VANITY' METRICS

METRIC	MEASURES	METHOD	AUDIENCE/ SOURCE OF DATA	EXAMPLE REFERENCE
Reach	Number of posts (e.g. photo posts, link posts, status posts, video posts)	Data aggregation	Owned digital assets	Non-specific
	Posts per day	Data aggregation	Owned digital assets	Non-specific
	Re-posts per day	Data aggregation	Owned digital assets	Non-specific
	Number of impressions (e.g number of visitors to digital asset page)	Data aggregation	Owned digital assets	Non-specific
	Number of assets maintained (e.g. blogs, Facebook pages, website pages, website content, staff profiles, Twitter handles)	Data aggregation	Owned digital assets	Diplomacy.Live
	Number of platforms used (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, website, Weibo, WeChat)	Data aggregation	Owned digital assets	Diplomacy.Live
	Number of countries/regions covered by social network	Data aggregation	Owned digital assets	Non-specific
	Density of social network (e.g. number of followers situated in country x)	Data aggregation	Owned digital assets	Non-specific
Engagement	Number of user interactions with assets (aggregated across platforms or platform specific; e.g. likes, shares, retweets of content)	Data aggregation	Content users (e.g. social media platform users)	Swedish Digital Dashboard
	Number of followers (or equivalent platform-specific metric)	Data aggregation	Owned digital assets	Swedish Digital Dashboard
	Number of interactions between staff and user (e.g. responses to posts)	Data aggregation	Owned digital assets	Swedish Digital Dashboard
	Network growth (% over time, e.g. annually, aggregated across platforms and assets)	Data aggregation	Owned digital assets	Swedish Digital Dashboard
	Number of offline event participants who report online content as source of hearing about event	Exit survey	Content users cum participants	NAO: Exporting the UK Brand Overseas
	Number offline event participants who report online content as reason for participating	Exit survey	Content users cum participants	NAO: Exporting the UK Brand Overseas
Satisfaction	Number of positive actions (e.g. likes, aggregated across assets and platforms, or asset/platform specific)	Online survey	Content users (e.g. social media platform users)	Swedish Digital Dashboard
	Favorable attitudes to content themes (e.g. positive comments)	User activity monitoring and analysis	Content users (e.g. social media platform users)	Non-specific
	Quality of assets (e.g. website is up-to-date)	Expert assessment	Owned digital assets	Diplomacy.Live

websites, and social media profiles; all owned online content such as blog posts, videos and images; all tweets, shares and posts; all digital communication campaigns; and all branded tools and apps (see Example 23).

However, while useful in some respects, the 'vanity' metric model fails to fully capture how an actor is performing in relation to a specific issue, relative to other actors and sources. Given the importance of strategic communication campaigns centering on particular policy issues – sexual reproductive health and rights for Sweden, for example – there is value in augmenting the 'vanity' model with other approaches to data analytics. The distinction here is between the assessment of the number of people engaging with Midwives4All content – the indicator of success used by the Swedish campaign – and an assessment of the impact and longevity of the campaign's messaging in relation to the other sources of information currently available online addressing similar issues. Table 8 lists a set of alternative metrics and methods proposed by Richard Rogers, founder of the DMI, that attempt to capture a more nuanced measure of engagement drawing on digital data.

Although currently employed principally as means for observing and mapping spaces, such metrics might easily be repurposed to evaluate efforts by PD actors to associate themselves with and to shape issue-spaces of strategic importance. Equally, these new metrics offer the opportunity to index digital diplomacy efforts worldwide in a complimentary manner to Diplomacy Live. Such an index has been proposed by SYM Consulting as part of DIGI: Digital Index of Global Influence, which is currently under consideration by the British Council. Its authors describe the project as aiming to create the world's first data-driven global index of countries' and others' influence in the digital space, as well as to stimulate innovation and research by building bridges between public diplomacy practice and academia (MacDonald 2018b).

Table 8 'CRITICAL' METRICS

NAME	DESCRIPTION	POSSIBLE METHOD(S) AND/OR TOOLS
Dominant Voice	Captures the sources considered most impactful (though not necessarily credible) within a given issue space	• @-mention count (Twitter) • URL count (Twitter, Facebook) to assess most referenced content/content supplier • # frequency and co-hashtag analysis (Twitter) to understand dominant agendas • Most engaged-with content analysis (Facebook) within page network, counting likes, shares, reactions and comments • Subscription network analysis and features network analysis (Youtube) to understand who subscribes to which channel and/or which channels feature which • Filter activism analysis (Instagram) to understand which filters are dominating a given space
Concern	Captures whether a person or organization (or sets thereof) are present or absent within the space	Quantify the number of mentions of a given actor within a given space, using a keyword search to construct a set of sources (e.g. top 200 results on Google) and using a Google scraper (e.g. the Lippmanian Device) to determine the relative prominence of that actor within that set, based on the number of mentions
Commitment	Captures the longevity of persistence of concern exhibited by an actor in respect to the given issue	• Website analysis over time to assess the consistency with which an issue is represented on page(s) • Keyword query of website using issue headings to determine number of pages dedicated to that issue, together with content analysis to quantify number of words spent on each
Positioning	Captures the relative position of an actor in respect to an issue	# analysis (Twitter, Instagram) to identify positioning and anti-positioning (e.g. #jesuswins vs. #lovewins, two prominent hashtags related to the U.S. Supreme Court ruling on same-sex marriage) and subsequently to identify hashtag publics
Alignment	Captures group formation through positioning	• Keyword analysis to determine groupings of actors around particular positionings • Multiple keyword analysis to determine clustered alignment of actors

13

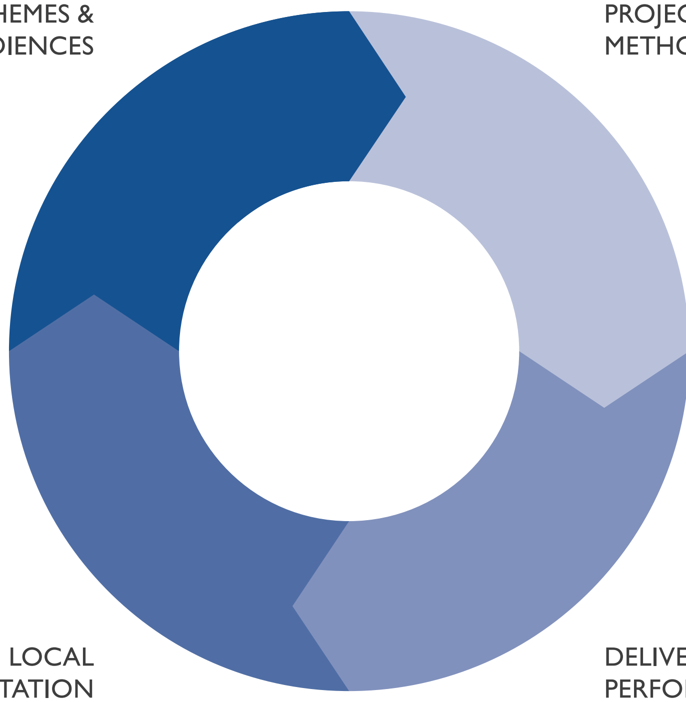
13. Rogers 2018a, 2018b

LEARNING 5

KEY FINDINGS:

- Much of the learning taking place in the PD sector is ad-hoc and opportunistic.
- A few exceptional cases were identified where strategies are in place to improve learning in four domains across the project cycle (see Diagram 3):
  - **Objective, theme and target audience setting:** by enabling inclusive participation of diverse stakeholders
  - **Project methodologies:** by leveraging internal, local and expert networks for iterative development.
  - **Organization-wide delivery and performance:** by optimizing consistency and standardization in reporting.
  - **Local adaptation of activities and communications:** by embedding co-creation processes with local stakeholders.

Diagram 3
LEARNING IN 4 DOMAINS



DOMAIN 1
OBJECTIVE, THEME AND TARGET AUDIENCE SETTING

In aggregate, strategic objectives, thematic priorities and prescribed target groups should focus the activities of all actors within a PD organization. As such, they represent a way of directing PD efforts at a macro-level. Effective PD is not the work of one bureau or organization, but of many. There is widespread consensus within the sector that objective-setting processes need to be inclusive. Ongoing transparency in decision-making and the refinement of a final strategy requires continued coordination and involvement of stakeholders. Decisions need to be evidence-led and results-focused, which requires accessible reporting as well as clearly articulated and actionable insights. Forums for stakeholder decision-makers to debate and collectively act upon evidence constitute good learning practice and are a common feature of PD in Norway, Sweden, the UK the Netherlands and Germany. (see Example 24).

A best-in-class example in this domain is the Swiss Federal Administration, which has established an inclusive, Inter-Departmental Working Group (IDWG) for Communication Abroad (see Example 19). This group is made up of a range of government department stakeholders as well as interest-representatives from across the business, travel and culture sectors. Objectives, priority areas and target groups for communication abroad are chosen to reflect the shared interests of the IDWG. At the operational level, Presence Switzerland acts as the hub connecting the different spokes, collaborating bi- and multi-laterally with different actors as required. This approach is exemplary for three reasons:

1. It recognizes the need for the inclusive participation of a variety of stakeholders.

2. It provides effective oversight of stakeholder activities.

3. It creates a platform for ongoing communication between stakeholders.

DOMAIN 2
PROJECT METHODOLOGIES

Improvements to project methodologies are leveraging accumulated organizational experience, along with inputs from local and expert communities. This requires mechanisms for sharing learnings internally (see Example 25) as well as building robust local and expert networks to review, reflect and recalibrate.

“EVALUATIONS CAN HELP TO RESTART, REOPEN, RE-DESCRIBE, AND RETHINK YOUR PROJECTS.”

AUREA GONÇALVES
GOETHE INSTITUTE PROJECT PARTNER[14]

In addition, frameworks designed to foreground the iterative evolution of projects emphasize the cyclical nature of project design, evaluation and feedback. The Goethe Institute in Germany, for example, have embedded within their organization an Impact Cycle, outlining the iterative development of projects (see Diagram 4). This Impact Cycle consists of four stages:

1. Planning and implementing impact stage
2. Recording and analyzing impact stage
3. Improving impact stage
4. Communicating impact to the outside world stage

Dialogue with various stakeholders (local communities, partners, target groups, policy makers, experts) is emphasized at each stage. At the improving impact stage, this dialogue is with project managers and staff; partners; and target groups.

This approach is exemplary because:

1. It encourages building networks for communication with diverse stakeholders: local, professional and governmental.
2. It emphasizes the need to work collaboratively with target groups to improve projects.
3. It provides a common understanding within the organization of the steps for improvement.

14. Goethe Institute 2016

Diagram 4
GOETHE INSTITUTE IMPACT CYCLE

15

15. Goethe Institute 2016

DOMAIN 3
DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE

Throughout the PD community, it is recognized that three key barriers impede strong organizational delivery and performance. These include:

1. Lack of a systematic and integrated, grand overview of the performance of multiple units

2. Poor documentation and knowledge-sharing of best practice

3. Reactive reporting motivated by results-driven agendas

Standardization and simplification of reporting, referred to by some as data harmonization, is vital to effectively compare and benchmark performance, to identify best practice, and to deliver targeted support. Frameworks adhering to a shared set of measurement categories and metrics for data collection across all business units ensure organization-wide consistency in reporting.

Digital indicators, when developed with specific and targeted mission goals in mind, provide a case in point: by ensuring common standards of measurement for all actors, they enable quick and easy identification of high performance and underachievement. To this end, the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs has built a digital dashboard for optimizing the delivery and performance of diplomatic missions' digital communications (see Example 27). This dashboard provides an efficient and thorough overview of the individual and collective performance of diplomatic missions. This approach is exemplary because:

1. It uses a set of common metrics to rank and benchmark the performance of all actors.

2. It enables quick identification of potential sources of best practice within the organization.

3. It enables the agile delivery of targeted support and solutions to where they are most needed.

DOMAIN 4
LOCAL ADAPTATION

The attribution of impact to successful local adaptation of PD activities is widely recognized by the PD community. However, the churn of mission staff; the challenge of maintaining well-developed local networks; poor reporting and evaluation of previous projects; and general lack of expertise around context-sensitive communications all present barriers to learning and sustainable engagement at the project delivery level.

In addition to maintaining a long-term presence in host countries, robust networks connecting local staff with the expertise of a range of local partners, organizational experts in the region, NGOs, etc. are essential for optimal engagement and local adaptation. Internally, within PD organizations it is imperative to develop toolkits to support staff in their design, delivery and evaluation of local activities and strategies. The strongest example identified of learning from the field is the Swedish MFA-led Midwives4All campaign (see Example 28). The development of this campaign followed a set of principles advocating co-creation with both expert and local groups.

The core theme of the campaign was sexual and reproductive health and rights. For communities living in several of the target countries, however - Afghanistan, Angola, Bangladesh, Mexico, Mozambique, Uganda, and Zambia – this topic is sensitive and taboo in different ways. The focus on midwifery provided a way of talking about these issues in a way that was respectful of local cultural norms. In addition, local Swedish missions were instructed to engage in a range of co-creation activities with local communities, to develop tactics for promoting and celebrating midwifery that were culturally sensitive and locally adapted. This resulted in seven very different local campaigns, which ran in parallel to a central, global digital campaign.

This approach is exemplary because:

1. It demonstrates a strong project design in terms of a commitment to learning:

   a. By encouraging real-time audience participation in the design of PD activities.

   b. By successfully integrating a global online campaign with tailored delivery at the local level.

2. The data gathered from the local consultations impacted the design and delivery of the global strategy as well as customizing the delivery of the campaign at the local level.

STRATEGIES FOR LEARNING

Finally, it is imperative that the insights gleaned from research and evaluation efforts are fed back into organizational learning initiatives. However, learning from research and evaluation is best achieved when tailored to a set of specific objectives. Table 9 maps the 4 learning domains identified in the expert interviews and document review across 4 key components of organizational learning practice: **learning outcomes**; **learning audiences**; **barriers to learning** and **outputs for learning**. Building on previous work conducted by M&C Saatchi World Services, the table aims to highlight how each learning priority can be customized according to the intended outcome, target audience, specific barriers and planned outputs.

Table 9
STRATEGIES FOR LEARNING

	OBJECTIVES, THEMES AND AUDIENCES	PROGRAM METHODOLOGY	DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE	LOCAL ADAPTATION
Learning Outcome What kind of change are you trying to create?	To assign objectives and themes for future public diplomacy activities and to determine appropriate target audiences for engagement	To improve the methodology of a particular kind of public diplomacy program	To improve organizational delivery and performance in line with objectives	To improve local staffs' ability to adapt public diplomacy strategy, methods and themes to local audiences
Learning Audience Who is the audience best positioned to create this change?	• Organizational leadership • Strategic stakeholders • Key private sector players	• Program developers and coordinators • Participating staff and partners	• Regional/sectoral management • Local and program staff	• Local management and staff • Participating partners
Barriers to Learning What is getting in the way of creating this change?	• Insular, monologic decision-makers • Absence of forums • Opaque decision-making and final strategy	• Lack of analysis of successes and failures of previous iterations • Poor communication of information of what works and what doesn't	• Lack of overview of performance across organization • Poor collection and sharing of best practice • Results agenda	• Poor knowledge of local culture • Disconnect between knowledge of culture and practical application
Outputs for Learning What outputs will this audience most respond to/find most useful?	• Accessible, transparent insights and evidence • Forums for discussion and common decision-making • Clearly defined strategy	• Easily accessible, digestible and accurate assessments of previous iterations of program • A bank of current best practice • Access to local and sectoral experts	• Simple, up-to-date indexing of performance across regions and units • Effective channels of communication between senior management and program/local staff • Concise instructions for improvement	• Easily accessible, digestible and fair reports on previous programs run by the mission • Robust networks enabling effective communication between local staff and community • Access to local and sectoral experts

CONCLUSIONS 6

This exploratory scoping study was designed to identify best-in-class examples from the Research, Evaluation and Learning landscape in the PD sector globally. The data gathered are based on 28 interviews and a review of over 40 reports and documents from 17 countries. The results have uncovered a series of important findings.

First, from a strategic viewpoint, there is a notable spirit of collaboration among those invested in Research, Evaluation and Learning within the PD sector that can be leveraged to share learning and advance the technical protocols of the methods and analytical techniques being employed by different countries. However, there is a dearth of tested theories of change applied within the sector to explain how various engagement strategies achieve particular outcomes, particularly in the economic and political sphere. In the absence of these engagement road maps, attributing evidence of outcomes relevant to the national interest to exposure to specific PD activities, messaging and campaigns is extremely challenging. The Goethe Institute and the British Council have invested heavily in this realm and have produced robust and rigorous frameworks with a shared language and common metrics across their constituent programs and projects.

Second, there are good practice examples of integrated multi-agency organizational structures for data gathering, sharing and analysis, as exemplified by Presence Switzerland and the IDWG on Swiss Communications Abroad. The Australian DFAT's monitoring and evaluation framework for the Australia Awards is designed to monitor outputs, as well as short- and middle-term outcomes to identify and address barriers to long-term goals. The Danish Innovation Centres represent a multi-sector approach to engage with the private sector, the principles of which could be applied to a strategy to engage with private sector and technology companies that specialize in data analytics. Key to leveraging the return on investment in data gathering and analytics is an integrated and organization-wide knowledge management system, akin to the principles guiding the system created by the Swedish MFA.

Third, in terms of data prioritization, while 'vanity' metrics dominate the field in terms of digital data analysis, other initiatives warrant attention, in terms of their potential to create a more nuanced and complete set of digital measures. These include the Digital Methods Initiative (DMI) at the University of Amsterdam, the UK-based DIGI collaborative, and the Turkish Diplomacy.Live research program. Considering how images and videos dominate social media and digital platforms, a deep knowledge of methods for analyzing visual data is imperative. Participatory methods of research and co-creation that involve local audiences promise to deliver more nuanced programs. The Midwives4All campaign, created by the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) is a strong example of this approach.

Finally, from a learning perspective, there is a burgeoning community of strategists and practitioners around the world delivering Research, Evaluation and Learning programs for their organizations. There are good practice examples of integrated evaluation frameworks designed to capture the complexity of multi-stakeholder engagement programs, impact-driven project cycles and local partner co-creation initiatives.

As the United States embraces the challenge of uncertain times and unpredictable forces, a strategic and long-term commitment to Research, Evaluation and Learning holds the promise to optimize engagement with a diversity of target audiences globally. The insight presented in this report are designed to make a contribution to the achievement of that goal.

7 APPENDICES

APPENDIX I
INTERVIEWEE PROFILES

NO.	COUNTRY	PARTICIPANT	ORGANIZATION	DESIGNATION
1	AUSTRALIA	Ms. Alex Oliver	Lowy Institute	Deputy Director of Research, Director, Diplomacy and Public Opinion Program
2		Mr. Andrew Byrne	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)	First Assistant Secretary, Public Diplomacy, Communications and Scholarships Division
3	BRAZIL	Mr. Claudio Garon	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Head of Press Section
4	CANADA	Mr. Matthew Preston	Canadian Global Affairs Institute (CGAI)	Head of Communications & Outreach
5	CHINA	Mr. Wang Yiwei	Charhar Institute	Senior Research Fellow
6		Ms. Ma Jing	CCTV America	Director-General
7	DENMARK	Mr. Rene Dinesen	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Under-Secretary of State (Consular Affairs and Public Diplomacy), Ambassador
8	EU	Mr. Walter Zampieri	European Commission	Directorate-General for Education and Culture Cultural Policy – Head of Unit
9		Mr. Pietro De Matteis	European Commission	Program Manager
10	FRANCE	Ms. Anne Tallineau	Institut Français	Director General
11		Mr. Michel Duclos	Academie Diplomatique Internationale	Director General
12	GERMANY	Mr. Sebastian Korber	Institute for Foreign Cultural relations (Ifa)	Deputy Secretary General and Head of the Media Department
13		Dr. Niklas Wagner	Federal Foreign Office	Head of Steering Group Strategic Communication
14		Ms. Tina Lierheimer	Goethe Institute	Speaker for Evaluation and Quality Management, Department of Strategy and Evaluation
15	INDIA	Dr. Kadira Pethiyagoda	Brookings Doha Centre	Expert on Indian Foreign Policy
16	NETHERLANDS	Mr. Jan Melissen	Clingendael Institute	Senior Research Fellow
17		Mr. Weijer Vermeer	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Communications Advisor Digital and Public Diplomacy
18		Ms. Ingrid De Beer	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Communications Advisor
19	NORWAY	Ms. Bente Lyngstad	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Policy Director Digital Communication

NO.	COUNTRY	PARTICIPANT	ORGANIZATION	DESIGNATION
20	RUSSIA	Natalia Burlinova	Centre for Support and Development of Public Initiatives & Creative Diplomacy	President
21		Dr. Roman Chukov	Russian Centre for Promotion of International Initiatives	Chair of the Board
22	SPAIN	Mr. Andreas Ortega	Royal Elcano Institute	Senior Research Fellow
23	SWEDEN	Ms. Lina Eidmark	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Communications Advisor
24	SWITZERLAND	Mr. Peter Fankhauser	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Deputy Head of Presence Switzerland
25	TURKEY	Gökhan Yücel	Diplomacy.Live	Director
26	UK	Lord Howell	House of Lords	Ex-Chair of Government Committee on Soft Power
27		Ms. Helen Bower Easton	Foreign and Commonwealth Office	Director of Communications
28		Mr. John Dubber	British Council	Head of Policy and External Relations

APPENDIX 2
DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

ORGANIZATION	DESIGNATION
Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada	2017 National Opinion Poll: Canadian views on engagement with China
Australian DFAT	Australia Awards: Global Monitoring and Evaluation Framework
	Australia Awards: Global Tracer Facility: Tracer Survey Report Year 1 – 2016-17
	Australia Global Alumni Engagement Strategy: 2016-2020
	Performance of Australian Aid 2016-20
British Council	Achieving Impact (NAO)
	A World of Experience: How international opportunities benefit individuals and employers, and support UK prosperity
	Corporate Plan 2017-2020
	Culture Means Business: How international cultural relationships contribute to increased trade and competitiveness for the UK
	Next Generation Reports
	Results and Evidence Framework
	Soft Power Today
	Influence and Attraction
Charhar Institute	Chinese Cultural Understanding of Soft Power and Its Meanings to Europe
	How to Deal with the Paradox of China's Public Diplomacy?
	On the National Identity of Public Diplomacy Theory
Danish MFA	Brief Introduction to the Danish Public Diplomacy Model
	Evaluation of the Danish Innovation Centres
	The Ministry of Foreign Affairs Framework for Communication on Denmark Abroad (PD)
Elcano Royal Institute	2016 Results: Barometer of the Elcano Royal Institute
Emirates Diplomatic Academy	Transforming Diplomacy through Data-Driven Innovation
European Commission	Analysis of the Perception of the EU and EU's Policies Abroad
	Eurobarometer Reports
	External Evaluation of the Partnership Instrument (2014 – mid 2017)
	Preparatory Action Report: Culture in EU External Relations
	The Erasmus Impact Study
	The Erasmus Impact Study – Regional Analysis
German FFO	Aussen-Politek Live: Foreign policy network in Germany
	Communication in the refugee crisis: A job for the Federal Foreign Office
Goethe Institute	Annual Report 2016/2017
	Culture Works: Using evaluation to shape sustainable foreign relations
	Introduction to the Strategy and Evaluation Department
Globe and Mail (Canada)	2017 Nanos Survey: Views on free trade talks between Canada and China
The Hague Peace and Justice Project	Leveraging stakeholder interests in public diplomacy: The case of The Hague Peace and Justice Project
Lowy Institute	The Lowy Institute Poll 2017
Norwegian MFA	Handbook on social media use in the foreign service
	Handbook on strategic communication and public diplomacy
	Norway's Image Abroad: A Shared Responsibility
Pew Research Centre	NATO's Image Improves on Both Sides of Atlantic: European faith in American military support largely unchanged
Public Policy Forum (Canada)	Canada-China Relations: A Note on Public Attitudes
Swedish Defence Research Agency	Russian Think Tanks and Soft Power
Swedish Institute	The Image of Sweden in the US and Canada 2017
Swedish MFA	Midwives4All: Some methodological observations

ORGANIZATION	DESIGNATION
Swiss Federal Council/Swiss Presence	Strategy for Communication Abroad 2016-2019
	Switzerland as seen by the foreign media: Referendums, the opening of the Gotthard Tunnel and migration issues
	Switzerland in the foreign media: 4th quarter of 2017
UK FCO	Chevening Evaluation (KPMG)
	Exploiting the UK Brand Overseas (NAO)
	Welcome to GREAT Britain

APPENDIX 3
RESEARCH EXAMPLES

EXAMPLE 1

CROSS-SECTOR COLLABORATION

#Diplohack
The Dutch and Swedish Ministries of Foreign Affairs

DESCRIPTION:
A collaborative enterprise set up by representatives of the Swedish and Dutch Ministries of Foreign Affairs to provide platforms for dialogue between diplomacy professionals and experts in technology, data, journalism, academia, NGOs and businesses.

VALUE:
Opens up the diplomacy profession by enabling not only cross-country collaboration, but collaboration across sectors.

SUMMARY:
Set up in 2013, #Diplohack is designed to integrate technological, data and social media expertise with the traditional skill sets of diplomats. As such, it seeks to address and adapt to the impact that advances in technology and communications have had upon the diplomacy sector.

By providing platforms for interaction between otherwise non-diplomatic expert groups from different countries, #DiploHack also represents a non-traditional avenue for building inter-country familiarity within key sectors.

To date, #DiploHack has organized fifteen events worldwide, from London to Hanoi to Tblisi. These bring diplomats together with entrepreneurs, tech developers, and experts from within non-governmental and civil society organizations and have helped produce best-in-class public diplomacy campaigns such as the Swedish Midwives4All (see Example 28).

Events range from hack sessions, in which participants draw on expertise from a range of sectors to develop technology-enabled, diplomacy-oriented solutions to major issues such as international cyber security, capacity and policy (Cyber Diplohack 2015), to international conferences with senior officials working at the forefront of digital diplomacy (Stockholm Initiative for Digital Diplomacy 2014).

Other issues addressed include the freedom of the press in Latin America (Hackatón por la Libertad de Prensa 2016); mobile health solutions for rural India (Hack Healthon 2015); and effectiveness and transparency of Humanitarian Aid (Hackathon for Humanitarian Aid 2017). These events have been organized in conjunction with and supported by organizations and bodies like PWC, Google, the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), and the Canadian SecDev Council.

EXAMPLE 2

DOMESTIC GENERAL PUBLIC – CITIZEN CONSULTATIONS

Aussen-Politek Live
Foreign Policy Network in Germany

DESCRIPTION:
A multi-format initiative that provides opportunities for dialogue and collaboration between Federal Foreign Office (FFO) staff and diplomats and domestic audiences. Formats include:

- Townhall-style meetings
- Open situation rooms to gather audience contributions to policy challenges
- Citizen workshops to enable co-creation between domestic audiences and career diplomats

VALUE:
Provides qualitative results which are direct, collaborative and informative simultaneously.

SUMMARY:
To address the tension between Germany's increasing responsibility on the international stage and German domestic audiences' ongoing scepticism about the active and larger role Germany is adopting via its foreign policy, the Federal Foreign Office is engaged in a program fostering permanent, nationwide dialogue with German citizens on the role that Germany has in European and international matters.

In total, more than 50 events have taken place from November 2016 to the end of 2017, across the initiative's three main formats: townhall style meetings, in which between 80-100 members of the public engage in dialogue with a representative of the FFO; open situation rooms in which 30-40 participants are asked to develop a solution to a current policy challenge; and the annual Bürgerwerkstatt Aussenpolitik, a one day citizen's workshop consisting of a representative sample of 120 citizens as well as career diplomats, in which groups of 10-12 address a range of current challenges for German foreign policy.

Such citizen consultations are an effort to pay attention to domestic public opinion on matters of foreign policy and, by extension, public diplomacy. Although an official position is presented, the purpose of the meetings is not to actively promote the message, but to gain necessary inputs by listening to public opinion.

The initiative aims to gauge German public opinion towards key foreign policy changes, as well as to receive input regarding those challenges.

EXAMPLE 3

FOREIGN GENERAL PUBLICS – ONLINE PANEL

Sl. Swedish Institute

The Swedish Institute
Image studies

DESCRIPTION:
An ongoing program of online panel surveys embedded within a wider research program to understand Sweden's image globally (see also: Example 15).

VALUE:
Provides both short-term, tactical insights related to current trends and longer-term strategic insights for building Sweden's image in emerging markets.

SUMMARY:
The Swedish Institute (SI) is a public agency that encourages interest and confidence in Sweden around the world.

Its primary objective is to foster confidence in and cooperation with Sweden in the world. To achieve this, it is engaged in an ongoing program of surveys targeting the general population of a range of priority countries. These surveys allow the SI to monitor and analyze Sweden's relevance in other countries; to investigate the impact of global trends and developments on target groups; to profile their needs; and to understand how they perceive Sweden.

Adaptation to target groups' situations is a key principle of the research. A 2017 study conducted in the US and Canada, for example, was concerned with the development of "a new narrative of Sweden and Swedish society" that had "migration issues" at its heart (SI 2017). Prioritization of this narrative reflected both contemporary events in the media and the findings of the Swedish MFA's pilot big data study (see Example 15). In response, the 2017 study sought "to determine whether the frequently one-sided or biased reporting on Sweden and Swedish migration policy has had any effect on how the general public in the US and Canada perceives Sweden (SI 2017)."

The surveys use web panels that are nationally representative in terms of sex, age and region of origin. Results are analyzed via regional comparison, level of education and age demographics.

The findings of the surveys feed into the SI's other key roles, which include:

- Sharing narratives about Sweden, Swedish skills and experience
- Strengthening the capacity and ability of individuals and institutions whose values align with Sweden's own
- Developing and maintaining networks

EXAMPLE 4

YOUNG PEOPLE – DEEP QUALITATIVE ASSESSMENT

British Council
Next Generation Research Series

DESCRIPTION:
An ongoing, mixed method research series exploring youth attitudes and aspirations across a range of countries.

VALUE:
Uses a wide range of qualitative methods to build in-depth understanding of its target audiences.

SUMMARY:
Begun in 2009 with research into young people in Pakistan, the extensive Next Generation series reflects the strategic importance of youth audiences to the UK today. The projects examine young people's views around education, employment, and lifestyle, as well as uncovering their hopes and fears for their country; their degree of international engagement and views on the wider world; and the values and beliefs that affect their lives. As part of the British Council's overall commitment to exploring youth voice and choice, Next Generation aims to: 1) understand youth attitudes and aspirations; 2) amplify youth voice; and 3) support better youth policy-making.

The research series exemplifies the use of sophisticated mixed methodologies to understand the experiences, attitudes and values of its target audiences. These combine desk-based literature reviews and national surveys with a range of qualitative methods, including:

- In-depth interviews
- Focus groups
- Participatory research
- Life histories
- Expert interviews
- Case studies

Since its launch, two further reports have been devoted to Pakistan, whilst the range of countries has widened to include Nigeria, Bangladesh, Tanzania, Ukraine and the UK itself. Work is also currently underway in South Africa, Turkey and Kenya, with a second round of research being conducted in Tanzania. Where more than one study is conducted in the same country, the research takes a deeper dive into a particular topic.

EXAMPLE 5

MEDIA – MONITORING

BBC MONITORING

BBC Media Monitoring

DESCRIPTION:
A research program that selects and translates information from radio, television, press, news agencies and the Internet from 150 countries in more than 70 languages.

VALUE:
Funnels and organizes all relevant local news into a central hub, to be accessed and analyzed as required.

SUMMARY:
BBC Monitoring was originally established in 1939 to understand how Germany and its allies were using radio broadcasts for news and propaganda during World War II. It currently selects and translates information from radio, television, press, news agencies and the Internet from 150 countries in more than 70 languages.

Reporting produced by the service is used as open-source intelligence by elements of the British Government and a range of commercial clients including media organizations, foreign governments, NGOs, universities, embassies, security groups, news agencies, think tanks and international businesses.

BBC Monitoring journalists based in bureaux around the world have access to local sources. With a nuanced understanding of language and context, they are able to identify information that other western news organizations may not have access to. The team covers thousands of media and social media sources in Europe, Russia, the Caucasus, Central Asia, South Asia, the Middle East, Africa and the Americas.

Services include:

- Alerts on key stories and themes as they emerge via constant monitoring of worldwide media sources in multiple languages
- Translation of foreign language media reports, important speeches, statements and social media content
- Analysis of media and social media behaviour based on expert understanding of the local media and cultural context
- Direct access to BBC Monitoring specialists in numerous areas of interest
- Personalized feeds, with notification of relevant content as it is published
- A full reference section with biographies, guides to local media environments and key organizations

EXAMPLE 6

TRANS-BORDER GROUPS – PSYCHOGRAPHIC PROFILING

European Commission
The Erasmus Impact Study

16. For more details of these factors, see: http://www.memo-tool.net/about-memoc/memoc-methodology/

DESCRIPTION:

A mixed method study to understand the effects of student and Higher Education Institutions (HEI) staff mobility on a range of variables, including personality traits; teaching methods, curriculum and research; and levels of cooperation between HEIs.

VALUE:

Uses psychometric measurements to segment mobile and non-mobile groups and to assess the impact of mobility on participants. The study adopts an exploratory perspective on the potential impacts of mobility.

SUMMARY:

Established in 1987 by the European Commission, the Erasmus Program is the EU's student exchange program. Students who join the program study for at least three months or do an internship for a period of at least 2 months to a year in another European country.

The Erasmus Impact Study (EIS) used a mixed method, exploratory approach for understanding the motivations and effects of mobility, looking not just at students, but staff and HEIs themselves. It took note of the perspective of individuals, as well as institutions, examining the perceived advantages and actual effects of mobility from the point of view of businesses and universities.

The EIS utilized a range of methods and instruments, prominent amongst which is its incorporation of six psychological factors[16] into its student and staff surveys. These six factors, which equate to six key personality traits, were used to examine real developments in the skills and personality following a stay abroad, which were then compared to the findings of perceptual survey questions. At the formative stage, these factors were also used to demonstrate that, even before travel, mobile individuals are more likely to show higher values for the six personality traits measured, making them useful in the identification and segmentation of audiences most likely to go abroad.

The qualitative portion of the EIS illustrated a range of methods for communicating with a large, dispersed and diverse set of samples. These included asynchronous online interviews, live online interviews, telephone interviews, face-to-face interviews, focus groups and workshops.

EXAMPLE 7

STRATEGIC STAKEHOLDERS – CONSULTATION SESSIONS

HAGUE PROJECT
PEACE AND JUSTICE

The Hague Peace and Justice Project
Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs

DESCRIPTION:
A collaborative public diplomacy initiative employing formative qualitative research to ensure stakeholder alignment and to devise a common set of aims, narratives and actions.

VALUE:
Enables profitable, long-term collaboration between diverse stakeholders.

SUMMARY:
Although there have been many public diplomacy network initiatives over the years, collaborative initiatives such as Hague Peace and Justice are far less common. For such projects to succeed, balancing stakeholder needs is essential; as a result, the alignment of stakeholder interests constituted a prominent aspect of the project's formative set-up.

The project engaged a wide range of strategic stakeholders, including:

- Dutch government entities, such as the Ministries of Security and Justice, Economic Affairs, and Defence
- International governmental organizations including international courts and tribunals; the Organization against Proliferation of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and Europol
- Knowledge institutions including The United in The Hague Academic Coalition (HAC), which comprises 9 institutions
- Over 100 peace-and-justice-focused NGOs based in The Hague, as well as a number based in Geneva, Vienna, Brussels and New York
- International media platforms connecting with thousands of journalists and bloggers in affected communities with a focus on peace and international justice
- Private sector organizations such as businesses, governments and knowledge institutions operating within The Hague Security Delta

To ensure alignment of stakeholder interests, and to ensure that its aims, narratives and actions are properly grounded in shared purpose and aims, the project began in Spring 2012 with a series of stakeholder sessions. In addition to identifying shared interests, stakeholders were required to identify their individual added value to the project.

Following this formative stage, events designed to create a sense of urgency were organized. These were designed to add value to one or more stakeholder groups and included high-level representative visits to stakeholder organizations; conferences; learning and training programs for journalists and bloggers; and platform creation e.g. HagueTalks (a series akin to TED but focused on the initiative's themes).

EXAMPLE 8

KEY PRIVATE SECTOR PLAYERS – ACTIVE PARTICIPATION

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF DENMARK

Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Innovation Centres

DESCRIPTION:
A set of unique diplomatic missions located in established and emerging technology and innovation hubs throughout the world.

VALUE:
Provides unmediated access to local markets, agendas and networks.

SUMMARY:
The Danish Innovation Centres (ICDKs) aim at supporting Danish businesses, research and educational institutions to access international knowledge and research, create connections and develop business cases with an international perspective.

They represent an innovative experiment in network-building within the strategic key sectors of business, research and education. Situated as parts of the Danish diplomatic missions, there are currently eight centres in total around the world, all located in areas of high importance for technology and innovation (Silicon Valley, Sao Paulo, Seoul, New Delhi/Bangalore, Munich, Shanghai, Tel Aviv and Boston).

The primary task of the centres is to make contact and help Danish companies as well as researchers, universities and educational institutions gain access to local networks, knowledge, capital and markets. They offer services and deliverables such as market analysis, monitoring of knowledge, technology and trends, partner search and matchmaking. Their clients typically work in high-tech sectors such as ICT, Life Sciences and Cleantech, primarily within knowledge and tech-intensive businesses. However, the ICDKs work with companies in any industry so long as they are relevant subjects for the innovation services that ICDKs are offering.

In terms of PD, the main advantages of the ICDKs are twofold: increased knowledge of target countries, and the promotion of brand Denmark and the Danish strongholds amongst key audiences within those countries. Understanding of current developments and activities in R&D sectors across the eight locations is regarded by the Danish MFA as key to promoting Denmark as a technologically innovative and supportive country. It also enables Denmark to stay abreast of important technological developments, and to locate key strategic partners for implementing its own innovative projects. The ICDKs therefore produce regular reports addressing a range of issues, including:

- Analyses and mapping of education sectors, to better target high-achieving youth in the respective countries

- Analyses and mapping of local R&D networks, to identify key potential partners

- Analyses of local developments in priority technology areas such as big data

EXAMPLE 9

PUBLIC OPINION - TRIANGULATION

Public Policy Forum Canada
Canada-China Relations: A Note on Public Attitudes

DESCRIPTION:
Analysis of the issues of public opinion polling, informed by a review of multiple public opinion surveys on the same issue.

VALUE:
Highlights the complexity of gauging 'public opinion' towards a country (or countries), underlining both the frequent incomparability of individual findings and the array of interests motivating research.

SUMMARY:
The growing sense of uncertainty regarding the stability of the liberal world order, combined with the Trudeau government's clear intent to deepen Canadian relations with China, have turned the spotlight onto the Canadian public's views about China. A number of public surveys have been commissioned to gauge the national mood towards their neighbour, yet their results are rarely uniform. Such surveys often ask different or overlapping questions, resulting in issues of non-comparability. Equally, experts have noted the prevalence of bias resulting from the invested interests of the bodies commissioning the research.

This leads to clear challenges in knowing how to apply or even respond to the findings of public opinion polls. Whilst the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada's 2017 National Opinion Poll prefaced its findings with the suggestion that "Trudeau and his ministers should take heart" from the positive shift in public opinion found by their research, a Nanos poll conducted the same year instead sounded "a cautionary note for the Liberal government as to how Canadians feel about engaging China on a new free-trade agreement (Asia Pacific 2017; Nanos 2017)." Such contradictions are a sign of the wider difficulties facing researchers of public opinion.

EXAMPLE 10

TRACKING AND RANKING - OVER-TIME MULTI-COUNTRY INDICES

Anholt-GFK Roper Nation Brand Index

DESCRIPTION:

Index of the reputation of 50 countries, established via the online surveying of approximately 20,000 adults (18+) in 20 core panel countries.

VALUE:

Defines 6 dimensions of national competence against which perceptions are assessed, across a range of research criteria.

SUMMARY:

Originally developed in 2005 by Simon Arnholt and later expanded following the partnership with GfK, the Anholt-GfK Roper Nation Brands Index explores a country's 'brand image' by examining six dimensions of national competence, all of which are weighted equally. The six dimensions include:

- Exports: "the public's image of products and services from each country"
- Governance: "public opinion about national government competency and fairness, as well as its perceived commitment to global issues"
- Culture and Heritage: "global perceptions of each nation's heritage and appreciation for its contemporary culture"
- Investment and Immigration: "the power to attract people to live, work and study in each country and how people perceive a country's quality of life and business environment"
- Tourism: "the level of interest in visiting a country and the draw of natural and man-made tourist attractions"
- People: "the population's reputation for competence, openness and friendliness and other qualities such as tolerance"

Conducted annually, this index examines the reputation of 50 countries. Each year, approximately 20,000 adults aged 18 and over in 20 core panel countries are interviewed online. Data collection is achieved through online self-administered interviews. These online interviews utilise a variety of metrics, including:

- Awareness of nations: very familiar, familiar, some knowledge, name only, zero
- Favourability towards nations, ranked from 7 (highest) to 1 (extremely unfavorable)
- Experience with and attitudes regarding nations: visited for vacation, for business, purchased products or services from country; visited websites from country; regional favourability; personal values
- Nation brands hexagon questions (see above) which are ratings scale questions, and word association questions in each of six areas. Scales are seven-point, ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree
- Standard demographic questions including: age, gender, type of area lived in, education, employment, status, profession, income; and where applicable, geographic region and race/ethnicity

EXAMPLE 11

CONTENT ANALYSIS – CODING FRAMES

Media Tenor

DESCRIPTION:

A global network of analysts that uses a custom-built codebook of over 100,000 codes to parse and analyse the content of over 400 media streams. Analysts identify and categorize each report; code and enter its content into a globally linked database.

VALUE:

Provides continuous media analysis.

SUMMARY:

Media Tenor was founded in 1993 as the first media research institute to focus on continuous media analysis. Employing this approach, the institute expanded internationally, serving blue chip companies, NGOs, governments, the media and elite universities.

Media Tenor research is conducted in two steps:

1. Every day, media analysts encode every single information unit from all articles or news stories of more than 5 lines/seconds in print or broadcast texts from the opinion leading media of the selected country under analysis. The Media Tenor Codebook is not based on topics, protagonists, or sources appearing in the media but rather reflects objective observation. The Media Tenor Codebook has developed over the last 13 years and has, due to daily updates, now reached the stage where it contains more than 100,000 codes each organised in logical categories reflecting the reality and the media content.

2. Researchers then take this data and describe what was written in the opinion leading print media or broadcast on screen in TV News. These data, which are unique to Media Tenor, are then correlated with public opinion polls, and voting results to determine what reality is shown (Agenda Setting) in the media and what reality is not shown (Agenda Cutting). Further, these results are compared to external statistics (poll results, consumer behaviour reports, various indexes like business consumer index, consumer confidence index, share price, tourist statistics, etc) and further research to gauge the media effects on public perception and behavior.

EXAMPLE 12

INTERNAL ASSESSMENT – COORDINATED INSTRUMENTS

EUROBAROMETER

European Commission
Eurobarometer

DESCRIPTION:
A toolkit comprising four dedicated research instruments for capturing how a government and its policies are perceived by internal actors and publics.

VALUE:
Multiple instruments provide capacity to respond to immediate needs whilst ensuring monitoring over time.

SUMMARY:
The EU is in many ways a unique actor in the realm of public diplomacy. How the Union is perceived from the inside may ultimately determine its survival, yet, as events such as Brexit have demonstrated, there are numerous agents within its own shifting borders vying to influence that image. As a result, public diplomacy for the EU is as much an internal as an external modus operandi. This is reflected in its level of investment in understanding in depth the motivations, the feelings, and the reactions of social groups in, hoping to enter, and outside of the EU.

The EuroBarometer began in 1973 as a series of public opinion surveys addressing a variety of topical issues relating to the EU throughout its member states. Since then it has evolved to comprise four interrelated instruments:

- Standard EuroBarometer
    - Twice annual survey consisting of approximately 1000 face-to-face interviews per member-state

- Special EuroBarometer
    - In-depth thematic studies carried out for various branches of the European Commission as well as other EU institutions, integrated into the Standard Eurobarometer's polling waves

- Flash EuroBarometer
    - Ad-hoc thematic telephone interviews conducted at the request of any branch of the European Commission to obtain relatively quick results and to focus on specific groups, as required

- Qualitative EuroBarometer
    - In-depth investigations into the motivations, feelings and reactions of selected social groups towards a given subject or concept, either through focus groups or non-directive interviews

Although they are typically used to monitor and understand public opinion across member states, these instruments are also occasionally deployed to include research into non-member states, particularly neighbouring states and prospective joiners of the Union. The EuroBarometers serve a variety of strategic interests, from augmenting findings of quantitative work to feeding into specific communications expertise. They also engage with various audience segments, from the general to the highly targeted, across a range of regions.

EXAMPLE 13

EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT - MIXED METHOD

European Commission
Perceptions of the EU and EU policies abroad

DESCRIPTION:
An in-depth mixed method study of perceptions of the EU and Europe in several regions of the world, with a specific focus on EU strategic partner countries.

VALUE:
Provides a holistic overview of perceptions together with explanatory analysis supported by teams of local experts.

SUMMARY:
Together with its in-depth internal assessments of public opinion, the European Commission conducts in-depth assessments of public opinion abroad.

The Perception of the EU and EU Policies Abroad study was large-scale in terms of scope, targeting foreign audiences in several regions throughout the world. The primary focus was on the EU's 10 Strategic Partner Countries: Brazil, Canada, China, India, Japan, Mexico, Russia, South Africa, South Korea and the USA.

The study adopted a mixed-method approach that combined:

- Media analysis of three selected newspapers in each country (April-June 2015)
- Social media analysis around three EU-related events in 2015
- Public opinion polling addressing a range of research criteria including: visibility, whether or not the EU is perceived to be active/important, the effectiveness of its interventions, attraction, values, and leadership
- Interviews with non-representative elites

In addition, to ensure the analysis of the wealth of data produced was thoroughly grounded in the local context, the study drew on the expertise of expert teams based in each of the 10 strategic partner countries. This enabled a concentrated focus on localized explanatory variables and insights, which in turn fed into a series of country-level as well as macro-recommendations.

EXAMPLE 14

SOCIAL MEDIA ARCHITECTURE - HUMAN DRIVEN SOCIAL MEDIA ANALYSIS

M&CSAATCHI WORLD SERVICES
RESEARCH, INSIGHT & EVALUATION

HUMANDIGITAL

M&C Saatchi World Services & Human Digital
Human-driven digital data curation and analysis

DESCRIPTION:
A versatile, human-driven approach to digital data analysis that incorporates network mapping, network analysis and semiotic analysis.

VALUE:
Human-driven rather than algorithmic analysis provides flexibility to ask questions. Network analysis enables the identification of densely connected information communities, helping pinpoint pivotal sources that facilitate the sharing of content and which link these communities. Semiotic analysis utilizes visual, narrative and audio information to provide a deep-dive, holistic picture of the digital landscape.

SUMMARY:
The steps in the Human Digital methodology are as follows:

1. SOURCE: Data is sourced from the digital space, with an emphasis investigating the spaces that matter most to audiences. A unique aggregation of the digital data sources means Human Digital has access to:

- The full Twitter firehose, enabling instant and unlimited access to all Tweets made on the platform
- YouTube's only Measurement Partner with an Audience Panel allowing for investigation of more than 4 billion videos for consumption trends
- An archive of Instagram posts active and accumulating daily since 2014
- Posts and comments on all public Facebook pages, as well as to macro-trends in the behavior of its › 1 billion active users worldwide
- Non-mainstream platforms that may have particular relevance to local audiences, such as VK or OK in Russia, or to specific-interest audiences, such as Telegram for analysis of VEO groups

2. ORGANIZE: Structure is imposed on the raw data through the classification of material which can then be analyzed for trends and insight. Instead of relying on algorithms to uncover trends in conversation, a human-lead approach is taken to the verification and classification of data. This provides the flexibility to ask questions of data that others cannot.

3. ANALYZE: Combines in-house expertise as well as academic partnerships to develop the most important insights. Network analysis provides an understanding of the ways online information environments are structured, providing insight into the travel of information and the identification of densely connected information communities. Semiotic analysis identifies the Dominant, Residual and Emerging codes operating within a network. Resultant insights help to define the communications landscape and behaviour within a specific category or culture.

4. REPORT: Finally, the outcomes of analysis are transformed into deliverables which articulate the findings of the research.

EXAMPLE 15

COUNTRY NARRATIVE MAPPING – OPEN SOURCE BIG DATA

REGERINGSKANSLIET
Ministry for Foreign Affairs Sweden

Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Big Data

DESCRIPTION:
A research program that began with an initial analysis of 60 million open sources in English, with the objective of mapping the narratives about Sweden across the digital sphere. Future big data studies will incorporate six languages in total.

VALUE:
Provides actionable insights for future communication priorities, and identifies areas for follow-up research.

SUMMARY:
Public diplomacy actors are beginning to adopt big data analysis as a tool for research into target audiences. Of the actors with which we spoke, the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs was one of the few organizations which revealed they had already made the crossing.

Their current research program's initial analysis included 60 million open sources in English, which were used to understand the narratives about Sweden currently present in the digital sphere. Going forward, big data narrative studies are set to continue, but across six languages.

The study revealed that whilst the majority (up to 90%) of what was being written online about Sweden was positive or neutral, negative narratives were mainly focused around issues of migration and refugee/immigrant integration in Sweden.

These results have informed both further research into target audiences, and communications strategy going forward. Example 3, above, illustrates the responsiveness of the SI image studies to the big data findings, by their refocusing on questions of media coverage. In terms of strategy, migration and integration have become higher priorities, with targeting focused on 'neutrals' deemed likely to be persuadable, that is, those with progressive tendencies.

EXAMPLE 16

ISSUE MAPPING – SINGLE- & CROSS-PLATFORM ANALYSIS

Digital Methods Initiative
Social And Political Issue Mapping

DESCRIPTION:
A growing collection of methods and tools for research into social and political issues online, including research across multiple platforms simultaneously.

VALUE:
Provides insight into online user engagement with global and local issues around which a country may want to position itself.

Recognizes the need to understand the differences between social media platforms to more effectively study the range of online engagement.

SUMMARY:
Whereas earlier forms of digital research into social media concentrated on profiles and the connections between them – the social network – issue mapping, as its name suggests, takes social causes (events, disasters, elections, etc.) as its starting point.

Such studies require a shift away from 'vanity' metrics, which focus on engagement with an actor's profile and outputs, towards new sets of metrics focused on attention paid towards an issue. For example, research focussing on identifying dominant voices in relation to an issue; how much attention is being paid by whom over what period; what else actors are concentrating attention on. Platform specificity in terms of culture of use and platform APIs mean that different platforms afford different methods for mapping engagement with an issue. To give three examples of methods for identifying dominant voices:

- On Twitter, one could use @ mention counts and URL crawling.
- On Facebook, inter-liked page analysis serves to identify networks, which in turn enables most engaged-with content analysis.
- On YouTube, two distinct forms of network analysis could be used: the analysis of video subscription networks – who subscribes to what – and feature networks – which videos feature which other videos.

Whilst single-platform studies are the norm, there are clear benefits to studying social issues and movements across media. First and foremost, this requires studies into user cultures of target audiences on specific platforms. Subsequently, it necessitates thorough understanding of the differences between platforms, together with strategies for reliable comparison and aggregation.

APPENDIX 4
MEASUREMENT AND EVALUATION EXAMPLES

EXAMPLE 17

ATTRIBUTION – DATA AGGREGRATION FOR NEW METRICS

BRITISH COUNCIL

British Council and The University Of Edinburgh
Soft Power Today: Measuring the Influences and Effects

DESCRIPTION:
Statistical study measuring the impact of 'soft power assets'.

VALUE:
Identifies a set of social, economic, cultural and political variables against which to identify and assess the value of various proposed assets – political, economic, and cultural.

SUMMARY:
Authored by Professor J.P. Singh, Director of the Institute for International Cultural Relations at the University of Edinburgh, and Stuart McDonald, SYM Consulting, Soft Power Today illustrates innovation in the field of metric development against the backdrop of perceived inadequacies of current datasets for conducting quantitative research into the long-term outcomes of soft power.

The study identifies a set of independent and dependent operational measures with which to demonstrate the impact of 'soft power assets' – political, cultural, economic and infrastructural attributes believed to contribute to a country's overall soft power. In doing so, it substantiates several hypotheses regarding the identity of a number of soft power assets and paves the way for the identification of others using statistical methods.

In effect, the study explores the impact of the following independent variables:

- Increased levels of democracy
- Decreased levels of restriction of personal liberty
- Higher levels of individual prosperity
- More and better connected cultural institutions based overseas
- Higher rankings on the Good Country Index
- Higher levels of internet connectivity

On the following operational measures of social, economic, cultural and political success:

- The number of incoming students from overseas
- The amount of foreign direct investment
- The number of incoming international tourists
- The level of influence within the UN

EXAMPLE 18

THE CHEVENING PROGRAM

FCO – KPMG
Evaluating the Chevening Program

DESCRIPTION:
An initial evaluation of the UK Government's international scholarship program, which aims to provide a baseline for measuring the impact of the program as well as guidelines for developing a framework for ongoing monitoring and evaluation of impact.

VALUE:
Gathers quantitative data to examine the impact of International Award Schemes beyond individual student participants, to understand their contribution to the economy.

SUMMARY:
Funded by the FCO, the Chevening Program is the UK Government's International Awards Scheme. Its primary objective is to support foreign policy priorities by creating lasting positive relationships with future elites across a range of professional and academic fields. To achieve this, the program targets young future leaders, influencers and decision makers overseas, providing them with the opportunity to study in the UK. The program offers one of two tracks for participants: Chevening Scholarships, which enable highly qualified individuals to pursue a one-year Master's degree at a UK university; and Chevening Fellowships, which are aimed at mid-career leaders and influencers and offer training, professional development and research opportunities related to their professional interests.

Carried out by KPMG, the impact objectives of the evaluation fell into two categories:

1. 'Return on Influence'
   The evaluation team sought to measure the extent to which program participation affected attitudes towards the UK among Chevening alumni (perception); whether and to what extent these affected participants have become agents for changing the perceptions of others in their network (transference); and whether participants have maintained contact with FCO posts after returning home (post-program engagement).

2. 'Return on Investment'
   The evaluation team also considered the economic impact (economics) of the program by assessing the estimated total Gross Value Added (GVA) of the program. Measures of GVA included:

- Direct expenditure by scholars and fellows whilst in the UK

- Indirect effects generated within the supply chain because of the purchase of goods by participants and alumni (e.g. if alumni purchase goods, the company producing these goods will increase production and require more input from suppliers)

- Induced effects generated through the additional spending of wages by those employed both directly and indirectly because of alumni expenditure

Estimates of the induced effects of GVA also resulted in a measure of the employment impact of the program, with the evaluation team estimating that 25,000 jobs have been created because of the program between 1983 and 2015.

To gather data, the evaluation team relied principally on a quantitative survey of program alumni as well as of FCO staff. Questions assessing the spending and investments of respondents in the UK provided the data for GVA estimates. The survey findings were triangulated with data gathered during 11 interviews with alumni and representatives of partner organizations.

EXAMPLE 19

EVALUATION – CONTINUOUS AND LONG-TERM

Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Federal Council & Presence Switzerland
Strategy for Communication Abroad 2016-2019

DESCRIPTION:
A multi-organization strategy outlining procedures and tools for monitoring and evaluation.

VALUE:
Ensures ongoing learning capacity thanks to numerous opportunities for responsive feedback from a range of research and evaluation streams.

SUMMARY:
The Swiss Strategy for Communication Abroad integrates public diplomacy objectives, research, practice, evaluation and learning. It aims to ensure close cooperation and coordination between a range of bodies, including governmental departments, tourism bodies, Swiss missions abroad, and various public and private actors. Presence Switzerland, the official Swiss organization responsible for the promotion of Swiss interests, collaborates closely with all of these, helping to achieve consistency across multiple public diplomacy fronts.

Key to the strategy's monitoring and evaluation procedures is the coordination of a variety of instruments designed to facilitate both monitoring over time and summative project evaluations.

Monitoring perceptions over time (data gathered from audiences in priority countries specifically):

- Issue monitoring
  - Monitoring of media reporting abroad, with a specific focus on elite publications rather than tabloids.

- Image monitoring
  - Regular surveys on the development of the perception of Switzerland abroad, targeted at general publics. Additionally, Presence Switzerland carries out regular international comparative studies.

Project and event evaluations (activities conducted at home, overseas, and viewed remotely):

- Exit surveys
  - Of visitors/participants, to assess the proportion of those involved who leave with a more positive or nuanced image of Switzerland.

- Social media monitoring of events
  - Events surveyed include not just high-profile international events such as the Olympics and World Expos, but smaller-scale examples such as invitations of foreign delegations and journalists to Switzerland.

- Project reporting
  - On correspondence of overseas activities with the mandate of communication abroad and to the objectives and thematic priorities of the strategy in force.

The integration of these two broad data streams allows Presence Switzerland to contextualise its progress over time with an in-depth understanding of the outputs and immediate outcomes of activities conducted on a day-to-day basis.

This, in turn, provides a cumulative understanding of what is working, where, in regard to the achievement of long-term public diplomacy goals, enabling decision-makers to steer the country's public diplomacy effectively.

EXAMPLE 20

EVALUATION – ENABLING LONG-TERM GOALS

Australian Government
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Australia Awards
Global Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

DESCRIPTION:
A program-specific monitoring and evaluation framework that includes a list of research tools.

VALUE:
Identifies a set of enabling factors for achieving longer-term outcomes, for efficient, future-oriented interventions by local missions and partners.

SUMMARY:
Managed through DFAT, the Australia Awards are an inclusive government initiative bringing together international scholarships, fellowships and short courses. They involve the cooperation of many actors and are implemented across a range of priority countries.

The framework provides a high-level mapping of the source, content and role of the various data streams supplied by DFAT staff and its partners. In doing so, it helps ensure that the necessary information is provided: to make day-to-day strategic decisions; so that the Awards are accountable; and that stakeholders and staff can learn how to improve both the Awards and other related programs.

The framework prescribes the use of a range of tools, including:

- Stored awardee information, held on a central database.
- On-Award Surveys, for evaluating the quality of outputs.
  - There are two kinds: Arrival Surveys (offered in semesters 1 & 2) and Ongoing Surveys (annually for current awardees).
- Stored alumni information, held by the Australia Global Alumni network.
- Tracer studies conducted by the Australian Global Tracer Facility (2016), for evaluating longer term outcomes.
  - These consist of alumni surveys, qualitative impact assessments and case studies.
- Media monitoring, conducted by Australian missions overseas.

As well as conducting ongoing evaluations to improve outputs, the Australia Awards framework identifies a series of what it calls enabling outcomes: factors which will influence the likelihood that an awardee will contribute to long-term goals, and which are within the capacity of DFAT and its partners to influence. In the framework's terms, these outcomes are:

- Employers deploy alumni so they can use their skills, knowledge and networks
- Employers remain engaged with awardees and fellows

The special prominence given to these outcomes within the framework's logic emphasises how evaluations of intermediate outcomes can be acted upon strategically, as evidence for directing the goals of engagement with overseas organizations and leaders.

EXAMPLE 21

EVALUATION – STANDARDIZATION AND SIMPLIFICATION

British Council
Results and Evidence Framework

DESCRIPTION:
An organizational monitoring and evaluation framework.

VALUE:
Integrates macro- and micro-level performance evaluation. Uses clearly defined audience categories to ensure consistent evaluation of reach and impact across regions and business units.

SUMMARY:
Newly developed to measure the impact of the Council's cultural relations model, this framework is stratified into four tiers:

1. Global reach and engagement – aggregation of data, sentiment and survey methodologies are used to evidence the Council's achievement of its five main objectives. These are:

   i. To provide opportunities through skills training and events

   ii. To build stronger connections between the UK and people worldwide

   iii. To improve trust and understanding of the UK

   iv. To add economic value to the UK

   v. To ensure value-for-money on financial investment

2. Participation – collects reach data across 8 results areas deemed critical to the Council's overall narrative. Across each area, reach data are typically segmented to include the number of participants; the number of professionals; and the number of engaged organizations. The areas are:

   i. Arts

   ii. English language

   iii. Higher education and Science

   iv. Skills and enterprise.

   v. Young people

   vi. Women and girls

   vii. Civil society and justice

   viii. Testing and assessment

3. Impact – the same 8 results areas provide the basis for impact assessment, which uses both quantitative and qualitative methods to generate evidence. Consistency in the results areas examined means that all business units, regardless of specialism or locations, are contributing to the same narrative of impact.

4. Organizational performance – internal assessment of organizational effectiveness and efficiency, examining finance, staff, engagement with customers and partners, and operations.

Although still in development, a fifth tier of the framework is due to be added. This will link the 4 tiers to the achievement of wider UK outcomes around security and stability; prosperity and development; and influence and attraction.

EXAMPLE 22

EVALUATION - DEEP QUALITATIVE ASSESSMENT

Goethe Institute
Dynamic Impact Model

17. See for example http://www.theworldcafe.com/key-concepts-resources/world-cafe-method/

DESCRIPTION:
A framework prescribing principles for learning-focused evaluations of projects.

VALUE:
Recommends deep qualitative assessment of projects. Identifies the propensity for independent local uptake of themes and ideas as a key measure of success.

SUMMARY:
The Goethe Institute's Dynamic Impact Model identifies two broad areas for evaluation: the sphere of activity, which comprises inputs, outputs and immediate outcomes; and the societal context, which comprises intermediate outcomes. Overall, the principal focus of the model is on evidence of sustainability of impact.

Qualitative methods are essential to both areas.

Within the sphere of activity, at the project design and implementation level, the model emphasizes the need to work as partners in dialogue with other actors, maintaining relevance as an essential pre-requisite to impact.

At the level of immediate outcomes, workshops, guided interviews, participatory observation, and other specialized qualitative techniques (e.g. world café method[17]) are all used alongside quantitative surveying to understand both intended and unintended effects of the Institute's work.

Evaluations of the societal context examine the contribution of the Institute's work to the achievement of a set of long-term aims, such as strengthening international cultural collaboration and improving relationships between Germany and host countries. They also focus on the sustainability of the Institute's work – the extent to which it enables long-term effects that continue to occur even after a project is completed.

To gauge future sustainability and thereby measure the success of a project, evaluations look for evidence of transference, that is, the independent uptake and translation of concepts, practices and themes beyond the scope of the original project.

As part of the analysis, expert and local knowledge are leveraged to identify explanatory variables affecting the likelihood of transference; these could be material-technical – the adaptability of the project's format, for example – or related to local political and cultural conditions.

Insights generated are fed into subsequent design phases, to optimize transference and, by extension, the likelihood that a project's themes will persevere independently of the institution that ran the project (see also Example 26).

EXAMPLE 23

EVALUATION – DIGITAL DIPLOMACY

Diplomacy.Live
Digital Diplomacy Review & #SODD16

DESCRIPTION:
A six-stage model for evaluating and indexing digital diplomacy capacity and competency.

VALUE:
Adopts an inclusive perspective on the range of platforms and assets available to interact with online users and populations.

SUMMARY:
Diplomacy.Live is a project run by the Istanbul Centre for Digital Affairs.

It began by developing real-time systems for monitoring public engagement with traditional diplomatic forums such as the G20 and COP21. Since then it has evolved, evaluating and indexing the general digital competency of country missions, MFAs and diplomacy actors worldwide. The project's ultimate aim is the delivery of a real-time monitoring and ranking system of all digital diplomacy efforts.

To rank countries, the project utilizes a total of 273 indicators across six categories.

54 parameters are used to assess presence, 19 parameters are used to assess customization, 27 parameters are used to measure up-to-dateness, 50 parameters are used to quantify engagement, and 63 parameters are used to assess influence. All these indicators constitute measurements of outputs rather than outcomes.

Crucially, these indicators cover an inclusive range of assets available to actors engaged in digital diplomacy.

Assets include: all owned pages and profiles on the many social media platforms operating globally today; owned online content such as blog posts, videos and pictures; websites; online campaigns; training resources for staff; tailored technology; and in-house tools and apps. This reflects the range of avenues available to pursue public diplomacy digitally, which is far wider than just Facebook, Twitter, and other market-leading social media platforms.

APPENDIX 5
LEARNING EXAMPLES

EXAMPLE 24

OBJECTIVES, THEMES AND TARGET AUDIENCES

NORWEGIAN MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Public Diplomacy Forum

DESCRIPTION:
A forum for collaboratively developing a strategic platform for future public diplomacy work.

VALUE:
Ensures inclusive participation of public diplomacy stakeholders so that common alignments and goals can be identified.

SUMMARY:
Made up of representatives from the private sector, the cultural sector, and various Civil Society Organizations, the Norwegian Public Diplomacy Forum provided a platform for laying down the foundations for Norwegian public diplomacy.

Decisions were made regarding:

- The focus of Norway's efforts – 20 countries, ranging from those in which Norway is well-known but a more concise image is wanting, to those in which it is little known and a profile needs to be built up.

- How Norway should be perceived – two key dimensions, Norwegian culture and the country's relationship with nature, were selected. Both of these dimensions should ideally be promoted simultaneously, with the end goal that audiences percieve Norway as a resourceful, engaged and reliable partner.

Its results have since been embodied in various learning resources designed to ensure consistency across missions and private parties in respect to the promotion of Norway abroad, such as the MFA's Handbook for Strategic Communication and Public Diplomacy.

Forums enabling the inclusive participation of stakeholders in country-level public diplomacy objectives were also in evidence in Switzerland and Sweden (see Example 19, above, and the Swedish MFA's 2.0 Strategy for the Promotion of Sweden Abroad' (2017)).

At the program level, similar forums were in evidence for The Hague Peace and Justice Project, and the UK GREAT campaign (see Example 6, above, and the UK NAO report 'Exploiting the UK Brand Overseas' (2015)).

EXAMPLE 25

PROJECT METHODOLOGY

Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Pitching and Evaluation Model

DESCRIPTION:
A set of protocols for sharing project learnings internally with project developers.

VALUE:
Provides a resource-efficient means of sharing best practice directly with project organizers.

SUMMARY:
Through an ongoing, annual cycle of pitching, funding, and evaluation of mission projects, the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs is building an evidence base of generalized learnings that apply to particular kinds of projects and using a central awarding panel as a socializer of learning.

The model follows an application procedure whereby missions compete for a limited pool of funds. Pitches are made for the consideration of a panel of senior MFA personnel, which judges which proposals will receive the funding to go ahead. As part of this process, the panel also shares learnings from previous projects where appropriate.

All funded initiatives are required to plan and submit evaluations. Whilst reporting is not standardized, these evaluations are meant to be insight-focused with a specific view to the planning and improving of future events by other Danish missions overseas. This focus is prioritized above exhaustive reporting on specific goals.

Within an organization that is limited in terms of resources, the Danish pitching model provides a cost-effective means of effectively sharing best practice between missions undertaking similar projects. The requirement of insights-led reporting is likewise efficient, since it prioritizes learning above communication of results.

EXAMPLE 26

PROJECT METHODOLOGY

The Goethe Institute
Impact Cycle Model

[18]. Goethe Institute 2016

DESCRIPTION:
A model outlining the stages, respective activities and actors required for effective, iterative development of projects.

VALUE:
Encourages leveraging local and expert networks. Maps out a journey towards project improvement.

SUMMARY:
The Goethe Institute's model for the evolution of projects outlines the place of evaluation in relation to the planning, implementation, improvement and communication of cultural work.

As the diagram below indicates, the model emphasizes dialogue at all stages of cycle. At the improvement stage, this dialogue involves both partners and target groups, and informs improvements in the management and adaptation of projects. These, in turn, feed into wider societal discourses in the host country and Germany and into dialogue with future partners, intermediaries and policy-makers, before eventually being fed through into the actual planning of the next project wave.

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EXAMPLE 27

IMPROVING DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE

REGERINGSKANSLIET

Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Sweden

Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Social Media Dashboard

DESCRIPTION:
A dashboard which aggregates digital data from social media platforms and assets across all overseas missions.

VALUE:
Uses standardized metrics to rank and benchmark performance. Locates potential best practice. Enables evidence-led, targeted support.

SUMMARY:
Following an executive decision by senior leadership and government, Swedish diplomatic missions worldwide are required to be active on social media. The social media dashboard aggregates the digital data from all these missions, using metrics such as impressions, likes, followers, as well as tracking trends in activity over time. It enables instantaneous ranking of the missions' online performance worldwide, which allows a central team of communications experts to identify potential best practice and those in need of additional support.

The monthly reach of our Facebook pages

EXAMPLE 28

LOCAL ADAPTATION

Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Co-Creation of Midwives4all

DESCRIPTION:
A campaign realizing a set of principles advocating co-creation with local and expert groups at the project design phase.

VALUE:
Enables effective mediation between core objectives and local context, for maximum impact and uptake.

SUMMARY:
The Midwives4All campaign aims to raise awareness of the vital role midwives play in all societies, and by extension the importance of women's health and rights.

The campaign was developed through collaboration with a variety of stakeholders.

First, the core themes of the campaign were decided by the Ministry's Communication Department with reference to established government priorities. These themes combined the promotion of sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) with the Swedish tradition of engagement in maternal care.

Second, collaboration with the medical journal The Lancet resulted in the publication of a series of articles on the role of midwives for SRHR.

Third, the subject was raised in Geneva before the UN by the local Permanent Mission of Sweden.

Fourth, seven Swedish ambassadors working in radically different contexts (Kabul, Lusaka, Dhaka, Kampala, Luanda, Maputo and Mexico City) were instructed to engage their target groups in co-creation activities on themes of midwifery and SRHR. At the same time, the central communications team worked with the Swedish digital creative school Hyper Island to develop the accompanying digital campaign.

The final result was seven locally adapted campaigns, each one connected thematically to a global digital campaign that began with a Thunderclap strategy, i.e. the simultaneous launch across 264 influential digital accounts.

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